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VALLEY STAR

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365 Days of News at Valley

■ A look back at the campus news for 2003.

BY KRISTA CARLSON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The Valley College community, students, faculty and others, stand strong and look forward to the new year as 2003 draws to a close. The past 365 days have brought us fee hikes, the largest drug bust in college history and much conflict surrounding the occupation of Iraq. Here's a brief recount of the year's memorable news moments:

In the early months students and community college supporters rallied together to demand their fair share of the budget from Gov. Gray Davis. Postcards, lobbying efforts in Sacramento, town hall meetings and marches through the streets of Downtown Los Angeles prevented millions of dollars from being cut out of the community college budget.

Before the year's end, two Valley figures, Vice President of Student Services Yasmin Delahoussaye and former Associated Student Union Parliamentarian Jessica Salazar received the "Keeping the Beat" award from the California Community College League for their organization of the March rally against the budget cuts, and California community colleges ranked No. 2 among the nation's top ten activist schools in a Mother Jones magazine poll.

When the state legislature finally approved the 2003-2004 budget, it included a $7 per unit increase for community college students. As a result of the budget crisis, Californians statewide chose to recall Davis and elected Arnold Schwarzenegger to lead the state in a better direction. Before leaving office Gov.

See *News* page 8

HARAMBEE!

TAMMY ABBOTT/VALLEY STAR

LET THERE BE LIGHT - Christina Hairston of the Black Student Union lighs a candle for the sixth principle, Kuumba (creativity), to celebrate Kwanzaa on Thursday in the Fireside room.

Kwanzaa Ceremony Hosted by BSU

■ More than 30 students attend traditional ceremony.

BY KRISTA CARLSON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The rhythm beat down the halls of the campus center Thursday night, and it came from the fireside room. Inside, Black Student Union members presented a pre-Kwanzaa celebration with the accompaniment of tribal drumming by professional drummer Harold Lott.

"Seven times I call you, seven times I call you to unity," Sherretta Thomas announced before a crowd of nearly 40. Following cries of "Harambee," six BSU members marched in led by club president Tara Perry, all bedecked in the traditional red, green and black of the holiday. There should have been seven, but one BSU member had conflicting obligations.

Standing before the mishumaa saba (seven candles), the hosts made a call to family and asked elders to take their seats of honor before beginning the ceremony, including BSU adviser Rod Lyons and Vice President of Student Services Yasmin Delahoussaye.

Along with Perry and Thomas, Shaaron Smith, Juliez Frazer, Michelle Hairston, Christina Robinson and Aneska Ernest called out seven principles of Kwanzaa: Umoja, unity; Kujichagulia, self-determination; Ujima, collective work and responsibility; Ujaama, cooperative economics; Nia, purpose; Kuumba, creativity and Imani, faith. Lott punctuated each announcement as his hands met the leather head of his conga.

"Kwanzaa is a ritual that helps us maintain our cultural identity," Perry said. "Kwanzaa was created to introduce and reinforce seven basic values of African culture which contribute to building and reinforcing family, community and culture of African American people."

Maulana Karenga developed Kwanzaa, "first fruits," in 1966. It is based on the harvest celebrations of Africa. The colors are symbolic: Black for the people, red for their struggle and green for the future and hope.

From Dec. 26 to Jan. 1, one candle is lit each day, beginning

See *Kwanzaa* page 7

ASU Wraps Up Year, Looks to '04

■ ASU board makes plans for 2004 and reflects on 2003.

BY LAGINA PHILLIPS
STAFF WRITER

The Valley College Associated Student Union wrapped up the fall semester with a focus on next year's rally efforts against the budget cuts.

"We've worked hard this semester and we're getting ready for next semester," said Igor Kagan, ASU Commissioner of Political Affairs. "We're looking forward to events coming up."

ASU members are busy planning next semester's events while studying for their finals.

"We're students first; we're concentrating on our finals," Kagan said. "We'll be making up flyers for the budget cut mobilization [meeting]. We're going to send out information leading up to the 'March in March' on March 15."

Vice President of Student Services Yasmin Delahoussaye will present the budget cuts at an open meeting Jan. 13 at 1 p.m. in CC104. The meeting will be open to anyone interested.

About 40 Valley students came out for this year's March in March at Pershing Square to protest mid-year budget cuts.

"Right now we're trying to get [together] about the budget cuts and the proposal coming in January," said Jessie Salas, ASU commissioner of student affairs. "We're hoping to spread the word throughout the campus. I'm really looking forward to all of us coming together."

One of the memorable moments from the first half of the new ASU's term is the visit

See *ASU* page 7

2003 National, Local News in Review

■ Looking back at some of the news stories of 2003.

BY PHILLIP ROBERTSON
NEWS EDITOR

From the military action to overthrow a dictator, to a state's electorate overthrowing their governor, headlines of transformation dominated newsprint this year. These are some of the top stories of 2003.

Beginning in March, the U.S.-led coalition launched an attack against the government of Saddam Hussein in an attempt to thwart a perceived threat of weapons of mass destruction. Some of the intelligence used as the principal justification for war received much criticism and was ultimately proven false. However, the coalition maintained the justification for war by invoking the multiple United Nations resolutions, including resolution 1441, that established Iraq as being in material breech of U.N. mandated inspections and declarations of materiel, as providing for the

See *2003* page 8

BOB TEICHMANN/VALLEY STAR

ON SCREEN - The Valley College planetarium was the site for a demonstration of a new high-resolution digital projection system from Evans & Sutherland under consideration for purchase. The fish-eye 1,000,000-pixel interactive projector with a 5.1 channel surround sound audio system is capable of covering the entire dome and sells for $175,000.

Planetarium Ends Year With "Big Bang"

■ Valley College tests the new astronomy projection system, takes some "time."

BY BOB TEICHMANN
LAYOUT EDITOR

With the year coming to a close and many classes slowing down, the Valley College planetarium was still hard at work.

In eight days, the astronomy department put on two shows and four demonstrations.

Fish Eye for the Science Guy

A 180° fish-eye lens and three computer-control units are all the Valley planetarium needs to show an impressive visual presentation.

Aram Friedman and Kevin Scott of Evans and Sutherland Computer Corporation came to Valley Dec. 11 to demonstrate the Digistar 3, a $175,000 system designed with small to mid-size planetariums and dome theaters in mind.

The Digistar 3 SP projects at more than 1,000,000 pixels for a full 180° view on the entire dome in the planetarium. Its audio hardware array is designed for 5.1 channel surround sound.

"Evans and Sutherland has demonstrated an impressive system," planetarium director David Falk said. "It's a powerful and incredible product."

People attending the demonstration were able to get a hands-on perspective of the system. Its various programs project starfields with anything from altitude/azimuth lines to a light-year radius grid for reference, with the user being able to "fly" those fields on the included control system.

"We've gotten high marks again and again from users worldwide," Scott said.

Various Digistar systems are in use throughout the world. The University of Texas in Arlington and the Adler Planetarium in Chicago, which houses a 75-foot dome, are among the many locations in the United States that have the Digistar system. Locations worldwide like the Eugenics Center in Athens, Greece and the Nehru Center in Mumbi, India also use Digistars for their various presentations.

A project in the works is a 64 million-pixel system projected entirely by lasers. This high-resolution system would outclass current Imax presentations. To date, Imax films are scanned at 4,000p.

"The possibilities of a system like this are endless," Aram Friedman said.

The Beginnings of Time

1/100,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000th of a second.

That's how long it took for space-time to begin, some contend. With evidence and theories pointing in all directions, it's hard to discern good sense in an endless stream of scientific debate.

Jed Laderman of the Santa Monica Astronomical Society spoke at the last planetarium show of 2003 at Valley Dec. 5 to give some perspective to an age-old mystery.

See *Astro* page 6

VALLEY LIFE PG. 4
FAREWELL TO FALL
STUDENTS PERFORM IN THE SEASON'S FINAL MUSICAL RECITAL

SPORTS PG. 9
50/50
MONARCHS DRIBBLE AROUND IMPERIAL VALLEY COLLEGE ARABS, SPLIT RIVERSIDE COLLEGE TOURNAMENT 2-2

GALLERY PG. 10
QUALITY QUINTET
THE BEST OF THE VALLEY STAR PHOTOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT PRESENTED IN THIS WEEK'S GALLERY

NEWS REEL

A CENTURY OF FLIGHT:

President George W. Bush visits Kitty Hawk, N.C. today in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Wright Brother's first flight on Dec. 17, 1903.

Bush is expected to announce a new focus for NASA by reviving the manned lunar mission program.

IN MEMORIAM:

The Valley College community lost valuable members of its family this semester. We remember these lost Monarchs:

Edward Irwin, 85, died in August, Journalism

Eugene Colichman, 85, died in October, Chemistry

Lou Benson, 81, died in October, Psychology

George Hale, 88, died in November, Biology

Richard Carlson, 72, died this month, Chair of Music department.

Cat Problem Resolved After Much Confusion

■ **Discussion ensues following discovery of dead cats throughout campus.**

By Jacqui Brown
Staff Writer

The number of cat deaths versus the number reported to the campus police ignited heated exchanges between Valley College administrators and staff members at a town hall meeting last week.

Information passed on by those who feed the cats estimates that at least 75 to 100 cats have disappeared during the past couple of years with many having been mutilated.

Sheriff's department officials said that they have only received 11 reports of cat deaths over the last three years.

"There's a large discrepancy of what we have reported so far as to what the amount we are being told have been killed," said Deputy Randy Tuinstra, head of campus security. "Hopefully everybody will begin to know that if they find a dead animal, we really need to know."

The Trap, Neuter and Release program started in 1999 at Valley in conjunction with Actors and Others for Animals, whose main goal is to reduce the population of cats on campus, continues to cause animosity and is elevating tensions between these two factions.

"The program we have is a very good one. It's been very successful and I think we've taken care of a number of cats on campus," said Tom Jacobsmeyer, vice president of administration. "Without cooperation, we're not going to be able to eliminate this frustration and I think that that's the basis of all the issues and emotions that have come here today and have existed previously as a result of not being able to stop whoever is hurting these animals."

Jacobsmeyer said the campus hopes to create a fund in the business office to which anyone can contribute in an effort to match the Actors and Others $2,500 reward, making it twice as appealing for any person with information regarding any cruel acts to the cat population.

He also proposed to the campus budget committee an increase in cadet patrols during the weeknights and on the weekends, when most of the cat deaths occur, but because of the initial $25,000 cost to the campus, the budget committee postponed the resolution.

Kathleen Sullivan, director of the disabled student programs and services, said that 30 dissected or filleted cat corpses had been found on top of feeding stations on campus over the past few years. Sullivan, a clinical psychologist, worries about leaving the campus late at night because there is a dangerous person on campus, adding that

See *Cats* page 6

Jordan DiNapoli/Valley Star

LEO THE LION - This feral cat is one of the hundreds roaming the Valley College campus, many of which have been discovered dead.

In Her Mother's Steps

■ **Valley student follows her mother's course.**

By Daniel Kane
Staff Writer

They get keys to every room, hand out tickets in the student parking lot, and are trained to use the campus radios. If you saw them you would think they're just another bunch of students. They are the cadets at Valley College.

Headquartered in the Sheriff's office, the cadet program offers a way for students to pursue a career in law enforcement, but for some like Sona Soghomonyan it is a good way to earn money as a part-time job. Soghomonyan, a chemistry major, is just one of the students attending Valley who holds this unique position.

"My whole family was here and so I moved from Armenia to America five years ago," Soghomonyan said. She came to America looking for a better life, like the rest of her family. After attending Taft High School she came to Valley, following in her mother's foot steps. "My mom was a cadet here, she said it was a good working environment and a great opportunity to make money while going to school."

Soghomonyan works only in the office, yet there is never a dull moment. Her job con-

See *Cadet* page 6

Gaby Alonso/Valley Star

NEVER A DULL MOMENT - With a smile on her face, cadet Sona Soghomonyan, answers her radio at the Sheriff's office Tuesday.

Rape Victims Find Support

■ **Every two minutes, somewhere in America, someone is sexually assaulted.**

By Jacqui Brown
Staff Writer

Rape by a stranger or acquaintance is cruel, ugly and demeaning and leaves scars long after it's over. It takes your power and trust of the world away, leaving you helpless and full of questions.

Nearly 3 percent of college women experience a completed or attempted rape during the college year. It has become the most underreported crime in the United States, according to the Department of Justice.

Stephanie Prince, program director for the Valley Trauma Center in Van Nuys said that the number is higher since it is such an underreported crime. The center's hotline receives 1,500 to 2,000 calls each year and volunteers accompany victims to the hospital an average 60 to 70 times per month, according to Prince.

"A lot of women don't report on college campuses for various reasons," Prince said. "The number one reason that women don't report rape, especially acquaintance rape, is that the victim feels that it's their fault or at least partially their fault."

Many times it's a 'suffer in silence' crime. Often the victim feels embarrassed, doesn't want friends or family to know, fears that it's not important enough to get judicial recognition or that somehow they deserved it by their actions. Sometimes victims of date rape worry about retribution from the rapist who could very well be a 'friend' or acquaintance, according to a study by the National Crime Victimization Survey.

"A huge issue that comes up for women that have been assaulted by someone they know is the conflict of trust," Prince said. "They lose the sense of safety and trust in the world. They feel that they have made a wrong choice because something happened to them by someone they knew."

Prince also said victims often question whether they had something to do with it or if they somehow encouraged the action, thus leaving the victim to ques-

See *Rape* page 8

Non-Paying Restricted from Registration

■ **Task force developing plan to respond to student non-payment of fees.**

By Susan Maltby
Staff Writer

Valley College students who have not paid their fees will soon be dumped from classes under new recommendations by the districtwide Enrollment Fee Task Force.

The task force is currently working on procedures to drop students from classes for non-payment of fees for the Fall 2004 semester.

Representatives from every community college in the district formed the EFTF in response to new state budget legislation that requires the state to bill community colleges for uncollected student fees.

"In past practice the colleges have allowed students to sit in classes, continue their education and pay their fees when they have the money. The district has more than 14,000 students each semester who pay their fees late and a number of students graduate without paying at all," said Yasmin Delahoussaye, vice president of student services. The new procedure will take effect when the task force agrees on a specific time frame for fee payment, Delahoussaye said. Recommendations vary from making the fees payable immediately upon registration to giving students a two-week grace period to come up with the money before being dropped.

"Dropping students from classes would be a radical change in practice for community colleges," Delahoussaye said. "All of our needy students need to high-tail it out to the financial aid office to be sure they're aware of their options and take advantage of any programs they may be eligible for."

In past semesters, Valley students haven't been dropped from classes but a hold is placed on their record preventing registration for subsequent semesters until fees are paid. Following the task force's decision, students who are late in paying fees will be automatically dropped from the class unless they fill out appropriate official fee waiver applications.

See *Fees* page 6

Pre-Paid Printing Program Stalled

■ **Students have to wait for anticipated program.**

By Peter O'Connor
Staff Writer

Students across campus are going to have to wait a few more weeks for the long-anticipated prepaid printing program here at Los Angeles Valley College.

The machines scheduled to arrive on Nov. 17 arrived safely, but a glitch in the software has caused problems, forcing them out of commission until the intersession.

The program is expected to eliminate printing costs incurred by the college and will allow students to print an unlimited number of pages in any of the four open computer labs — the Lion's Den, LAIR, CCAIVE and the writing center.

"We have people working on them night and day to get them up and running," Dean of Academic Affairs Laurie Nalepa said. "We just feel it would be better not to charge students to print right before finals."

The machines allow the user to load money onto a Monarch ID card; the funds can then be used to purchase printouts for 8 cents per page. The system should be up and running by the first day of the intersession, according to Nalepa.

Monarchs Learn the Art of Customer Service

■ **Graduation conducted for students in job training program.**

By Krista Carlson
Editor-in-Chief

Forty students graduated from the customer service representative job training program at Valley College Friday morning in Monarch Hall.

Program instructors Liz Casas and Jim McJunkin taught customer service and provided cashier training through a month-long series of workshops.

The students sang songs to commemorate the event, adapting lyrics from traditional carols like "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" to "We've had a great time learning all of our codes/ We run our store like nobody knows/Superior Store is coming to town," and presented a skit portraying the service skills they had learned.

"We've put this skit on because we want people to step out of their shells and do things they're not comfortable with," job training director Lenny Cuifo said.

"It was a lot of fun and we learned about how to deal with people and how to work under stress," graduate Anthony Diaz said. "At the end of the term you feel happier and more confident. Some things were hard, but we all got through."

Diaz learned about Valley's job training program through the El Proyecto Worksource Center in Sun Valley. Other students learned about the program through similar worksource centers in Van Nuys and Canoga Park.

"They will all be working at Superior, opening next week," Cuifo said. The new market, at Oxnard and Lankershim, will hire an additional 110 people after it opens.

The graduates enjoyed an outdoor lunch with their families and instructors on the patio beside Monarch Hall following the ceremony.

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OPINION

The Reason for the Season

BY JOHN TARR
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

It's always amusing when people want to win the lottery but don't buy a ticket. That's what I think of people who celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter without acknowledging the reason for the season: God and Jesus Christ.

In elementary school I remember some kids were absent on Yom Kippur or Ash Wednesday because their families practiced that particular religion. Only kids whose families celebrated that holiday took those days off.

Why do all Americans take Christmas and Thanksgiving off when they aren't all Christians?

Why then do all Americans take Christmas and Thanksgiving off when they aren't all Christians? If people don't want to thank God at Thanksgiving or celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas, then go to work!

It's too easy to take a day off and forget about God, especially at Thanksgiving. People tend to forget that "Turkey Day" is a Christian holiday. It was set aside to thank God for His grace and mercy.

William Bradford, the Plymouth Colony governor, proclaimed, "The great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest… he has protected us … I do proclaim that all Pilgrims gather on Thursday, November 29th, the year of our Lord [1623] to render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings."

In 1789, George Washington declared Nov. 26 a day of Thanksgiving: "It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God…" Abraham Lincoln did the same in 1863, and Congress finally made it a federal holiday in 1941.

On Christmas we celebrate the birth of a savior – His actual birth was closer to Easter but we celebrate it in December. America seems to have forgotten that Christmas is about God and Jesus, same as Thanksgiving — not trees, lights, mistletoe and presents.

The first gift ever given on Christmas was from God: the gift of His son. We have all sinned and cannot commune with God until we have been sanctified by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Savior.

Jesus paid for our sins through His sacrifice on the Cross. He proved He is the living Son of God when He was resurrected three days later, on Easter. Jesus is why we celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter.

Thanksgiving is not about a turkey; Christmas is not about Santa Claus; Easter is not about a bunny. Why would people rather believe fairy tales than believe in God?

Thanksgiving is a Christian holiday. Christmas is a Christian holiday. Easter is a Christian holiday. Remember that when you take the day off.

In this country, people are free to believe as they please – but it's time that we remember our Christian roots as a nation blessed by God.

On Christmas, then, we should give the first present to Christ by saying "Thank you." It is, after all, His birthday.

"Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and that His justice cannot sleep forever." – Thomas Jefferson.

HOLIDAY PERSPECTIVES

Do you have other perspectives on the season? The Valley Star wants to hear from people of all spiritual persuasions. Contact us at thevalleystar@yahoo.com and we may include your thoughts in our online edition (www.lavalleystar.com); please remember that letters should be limited to 300 words and may be edited for publication.

Happy Birthday Jesus, Hope You Like Junk!

BY SUSAN MALTBY
STAFF WRITER

Christmas can lead to confusion about a few things.

This time of year people of various faiths, and even people who lack any type of spiritual belief at all, join together to enjoy the season of giving and all of the tradition and fanfare that goes with it. Most Christians agree that a celebration in His name is cool, but much debate and argument arises over whether Santa Claus and his reindeer, GAP gift cards and the rest of the hullabaloo should be included.

For some Christians, this is the time to decorate their lawns with glowing plastic tribute scenes of the Nativity. For others, December marks the month in which they actually attend a church service. Still others feel it is the time to express their scorn for the blatant consumerism that has marred the commemoration of the birth of Christ.

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL ORDOÑA / VALLEY STAR

Every Christmas, my lawn bears a six-foot-tall, glowing representation of the King of Kings (Elvis Presley). Not because I worship him, it's just a family tradition. I tell the kids that the Christmas Elvis travels magically though the household plumbing to bring gifts whose tags read "From Elvis — Thank you… Thank you very much!"

I don't think my tradition means I'm less "Christian" than someone with a more solemn approach to Christmas. It just means I'm all shook up.

But that brings us back to the question: Is baby Jesus impressed with some of the silly ways we celebrate his birthday? The answer depends upon whom you ask.

Ask children if they like the lights, presents and all that Santa Claus junk and you will hear a resounding "yes!" Kids love Christmas, and they don't really care whether so-called Christians or theologians approve of all the chaos or not.

The season is for celebration. That means having fun and being joyous. Children know joy and fun more truly than adults ever will.

Christians are a weird bunch of people.

Some of them like to wear large crosses on their necks. I've been to Christian birthday parties where they think that a cake decorated to look like The Holy Bible is more pleasing than a regular one.

Someone's yuletide decorations may have significance to him or her personally, but I don't buy the idea that Almighty God has any preference.

Only He knows how to tell the naughty from the nice, and His criteria may not be based on jewelry or holiday decorating style.

Celebrate the season. The how's and why's of it all are between you and your God, and the truth and joy of it can only exist in the heart.

And then let this joy become action.

The zenith of the season is not a vague feeling of affection for others. It is instead a drive that causes us to improve the welfare of others, including people we don't particularly like and even some who have done us wrong.

Turn the season for giving into the season of forgiving.

And if the silly stuff like Santa Claus, elves or even a giant Elvis offends you then you're in for a Blue, Blue, Blue, Blue, Blue Christmas.

…NOW COMES SADDAM'S DAY OF PERIL. FA LA LA LA LA LA LA…
SHOULDN'T THIS BE CONSIDERED CRUEL & UNUSUAL PUNISHMENT?
STIFFTOONS
T.FARMAKIS '03

ILLUSTRATION BY TIFFANY FARMAKIS / VALLEY STAR

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER

EACH WEEK, THE VALLEY STAR EXAMINES AN ISSUE FROM TWO SIDES.
THIS WEEK: **SHOULD PRESIDENT BUSH BE RE-ELECTED?**

■ Make your voice heard! Participate in the online poll at *www.lavalleystar.com*

FOUR MORE YEARS

BY PHILLIP ROBERTSON
NEWS EDITOR

To put it simply, I like President George W. Bush. Not that I'm a gun-toting, God-fearing, abortion-hating, meat-eating, right-wing conservative Republican, but because I respect a man who recognizes his own shortcomings and responds appropriately.

Bush demonstrates his leadership by surrounding himself with people of the caliber necessary to effectively govern this great nation of ours. His self-deprecation is a welcome change from the holier-than-thou attitude that permeated Washington during the previous administration.

Bush knows that he is not the smartest man in the world and does not attempt to represent himself otherwise. As any president or business leader must, he delegates to those under him most capable of carrying out the responsibilities. No president can do it all.

His tax cut policy, while controversial to many, has stimulated the economy, according to some experts. Just last week, the Dow Jones Industrials closed above the 10,000 mark for the first time since May 28, 2002.

Unemployment numbers continue to drop and a crowning moment came last week when Bush signed the welfare reform bill into law.

The terrorist attacks on 9/11 gave Bush his legs after the tumultuous seas of the 2000 presidential election. The President did exactly what this country needed him to do: fight back.

Bush's down-home Texas sensibility united the country behind a single cause – rebuilding. He has not squandered the support of the world by exercising the previously determined will of the United Nations by leading the liberation of Iraq.

The countries that have not been supportive of the Iraq policy are welcome to maintain their positions of dissent, but Bush is right that the United States maintains no obligation to involve those countries in the awarding of reconstruction contracts.

Bush knows that he is not the smartest man in the world.

When Bill Clinton bombed Baghdad in 1998, he cited Iraq's resistance to U.N. weapons inspectors, fearing that Saddam Hussein was advancing nuclear, biological and chemical weapons programs.

Bush shares Clinton's view of Iraq as a security threat. He was right to enforce the 14 U.N. resolutions and the Gulf War ceasefire agreement by launching Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Bush did say during the 2000 campaign that the U.S. government would not be focused upon nation-building. Clearly this is happening in Afghanistan and Iraq, but do not forget that this policy only changed after 9/11.

The coalition's capture of Hussein last weekend will serve as a boost to Bush's Iraq policy.

In the next four years, Bush will continue to build the road to recovery from the Clinton/Gore recession. The stock market is poised to close out the year in the plus side for the first time since 1999, according to Fox News.

A stimulated economy will continue to produce jobs and the consumer confidence level will continue to rise as inflation stays low. Re-electing the president in November will allow a successful domestic and foreign agenda to continue.

THE MISUNDERESTIMATED PRESIDENT OF EVERBODY

BY MICHAEL ORDOÑA
OPINION EDITOR

I could not begin to detail Bush's litany of outrages in only 500 words … without the help of the man himself. (Each of the following quotations may be found on any number of sites and publications compiling "Bushisms.")

"I want everybody to hear loud and clear that I'm going to be the president of everybody." – Jan. 18, 2001

By this, Bush apparently meant everybody in the world. He has implemented an arrogant, shortsighted, bloodthirsty and avaricious foreign policy that has utterly squandered the surge of global goodwill America enjoyed after 9/11.

"Saddam Hussein is providing links to terrorists." – Feb. 18, 2003

His paranoia that Hussein is selling hot dogs to al-Qaeda aside, rather than address issues diplomatically or present a reasonable case for war, Bush possibly criminally misled the American people into the fray in Iraq.

"I'd rather have them sacrificing on behalf of our nation than, you know, endless hours of testimony on congressional hill." – June 4, 2002

Why this feverish, fumbling rush to war? Sadly, the capture of Hussein probably will not reduce the violence our servicemen and women face on a daily basis in occupied Iraq.

Now Bush expects the rest of the UN to step up with troops and funds to fix what we broke – but not to participate in the multibillion-dollar rebuilding contract bonanza.

Bush's disastrous economic policies have plunged the country into a $374 billion deficit, the largest in history. He has tried to blame the war, but his own budget director, Mitchell Daniels, said before he was fired that, "Even if we had never been attacked, and incurred no costs of war or recovery from September 11th ... we still would have gone into deficit."

"There's no such thing as legacies. At least, there is a legacy, but I'll never see it." – Jan. 31, 2001

Bush and his high-rent cronies probably never will suffer the painful consequences of their get-rich-quick-schemes; after all, they'll be even wealthier while the rest of us pay the price. Their legacy to future generations will be massive debt due to immense tax cuts for the wealthy, vicious slashing of social programs –

"They want the federal government controlling Social Security like it's some kind of federal program." – Nov. 2, 2000

– and worshipping at the black altar of Reaganomics. Unemployment is at an 11-year high, with more than 2 million active job-seekers out of work.

"Rarely is the question asked: Is our children learning?" – Jan. 11, 2000

We have not found bin Laden, WMDs or the CIA leaker, but we have found billions of dollars for sweetheart deals in Iraq and at home. Meanwhile, our under-funded schools languish under his ironically-named "No Child Left Behind" abomination.

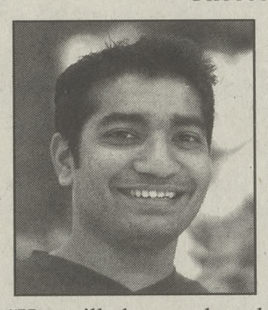
"And there's no doubt in my mind, not one doubt in my mind, that we will fail." – Oct. 4, 2001

And Bush's presidency has failed in every respect. When considering who to vote for in 2004, ask yourself this simple question: Are you – and the world – better off than three years ago?

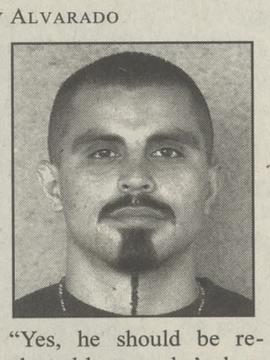
*Campus*View

Should President Bush be re-elected?

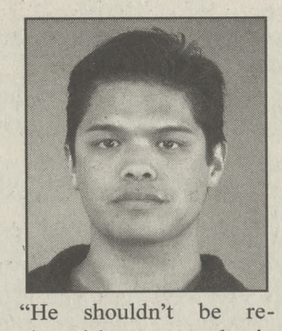
PHOTOS BY WENDY ALVARADO



"He will be re-elected because he captured Saddam Hussein and there is no other strong candidate to take his place."
- Shamsud Doha



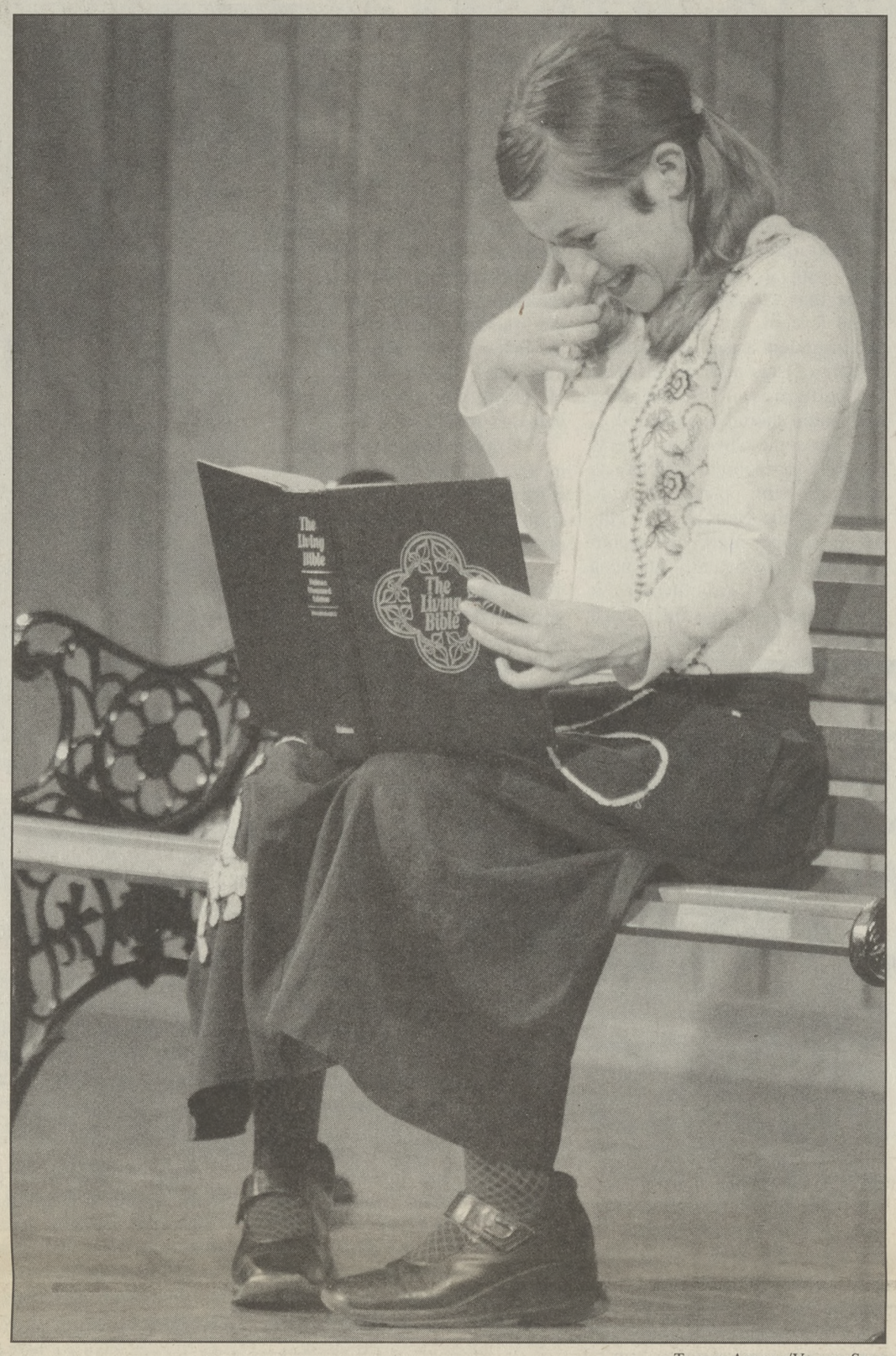
"Yes, he should be re-elected because he's done a good job protecting the country from terrorism."
- Julio Hidalgo



"He shouldn't be re-elected because, to begin with, all of his campaign was based on his father's unfinished business."
- Ariel Young

"No, I don't like the way he's handling our international relations and he's arrogant."
- Way Yu

VALLEY LIFE



TAMMY ABBOTT/VALLEY STAR

THAT'S BROADWAY - Students of the Musical Theatre Class perform their Broadway Recital in the Music Recital Hall on Thursday.

Last Call: Broadway Showcase

BY HARRIET STEINBERG
STAFF WRITER

There is hope for the terminally inhibited, the exhibitionist and anyone in between: Broadway Theatre, invoking the magical world of music and make-believe.

Students from Jennifer Kelly's music theater class gave a striking performance in the music recital hall Thursday afternoon. The show started with a bang when comedian-singer Jim MacGeorge warmed the audience up with his vaudevillian jokes.

After the laughter subsided MacGeorge introduced the captain of the ship, Kelly. Kelly explained that her instruction consisted of how to interpret a song, how to make it real and how to personalize it. The class demonstrated by acting out the words as they sang.

The audience enjoyed the performers' creativity, like when Ira Trachter opened a Sara Lee bag while singing "Sara Lee" from the musical "And the World Goes 'Round," and finished the number with a short dance as he sang the last verses.

Sitting upon a bench on stage, Jessica Raymond demonstrated a playful approach by showing off her red panties while she sang the song, "Don't Tell Mama" from "Cabaret." As she progressed through the song, more clothes came off, until she was in her black stockings and conservative black bra that inspired the packed audience to applaud wildly with catcall embellishments.

With all her worldly treasures in a small tin can, Raymond sang "Part of Your World" from "The Little Mermaid." While singing, Raymond sat on the ground and scattered treasures all around her on the floor in an expression of "I've Got Everything."

Dayna Price and Sean Bachand got a positive reaction when they fluttered a box of corn flakes and shone a flashlight that had no batteries as they sang, "Soon It's Gonna Rain" from "Fantasticks."

"I've been coming here for several years now," community member Howard Berg said. "I like coming; they do a good job." Berg first heard about the performances while working out at Bally's Total Fitness on Oxnard.

A lovely reception followed the program, giving people the opportunity to gather and casually chat about the show. The classmates drew together like a close-knit family; many expressed that they felt like family. The broad age range of the students, including some who had taken the class for 10 years, added to the kindred spirit.

"I like this class because it is diversified," Price said. The students have to be auditioned before they can take this class. "Many students are afraid that they're not good enough, but they're better than they think."

Mileage Of Kind Words

BY TAMMY ABBOTT
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Actions often speak louder than words; words can cause both physical and mental pain, according to recent research.

Magnetic resonance image technology, or MRI, allowed University of California, Los Angeles' social physiologists Dr. Naomi Eisenberger and Dr. Matthew Lieberman to show via computer games that mental assaults react in the same part of the brain as any physical trauma.

"Terms like broken heart and hurt feelings may be quite accurate."

"It's almost a poetic connection," Eisenberger said in a Los Angeles Times interview. "Terms like broken heart and hurt feelings may be quite accurate."

"It makes sense that emotional pain is something that we can measure somehow," said Ron Mossler, professor of psychology at Valley College. "It's so difficult to do and it appears that they've found something that worked."

For many students, in addition to the stress of finals and jobs, there is the holiday season bringing its abundance of family and money issues to resolve. These issues can be overwhelming for even the hardiest of students. "There's so much low grade and undiagnosed depression that goes untreated," Mossler said.

"Some people get depressed because they're lonely and they don't have anywhere to go," Mossler said. "Pay attention to the hints when someone says they're not going anywhere or doing anything. They're saying that they're available, so be assertive if you would like to open your heart and include that person in an activity."

Take A Hike:

BEACH HIKE

BY KATHY ARELLANO
STAFF WRITER

Not all hikes are mountainous tree-lined regions. California's varying geography offers, in addition to the scenery, striking beaches perfect for trekking any time of year.

The Carpinteria-to-Rincon hike offers six easy round-trip miles of shoreline and bluff trails, with just a few detours onto paved roads. At low tide walkers can examine tide pools or get a close-up view of sea lions basking on reefs no more than fifteen yards from shore. Schools of dolphins and porpoises can be seen feeding parallel to the shoreline, often in the early morning. Hikers will marvel at pelicans gliding effortlessly, just inches from the surface of the water.

A mile beyond the eastern end of Carpinteria State Campground is the California Seal Sanctuary, one of only four onshore harbor seal pupping areas in the state, according to "Hiking the California Coastal Trail: Volume 2." Closed from Dec. 1 until May 31 to allow the seals to breed and pup, hikers can observe the activities from the bluffs.

"The Coastal Trail is confined to a narrow corridor of land, the topography is difficult in places and natural features such as rivers block the path," according to "Hiking the CCT: Volume 2" co-author Richard Nichols. "Even more difficult are the issues of private ownership, conflicting governmental jurisdictions, and the many zoning laws involved. In order to complete the trail, everyone from homeowners to state and federal agencies must be dealt with."

You may want to wear old shoes for a walk along the Carpinteria shoreline, where tar has been seeping out of the earth for millennia. The sticky ooze is difficult to remove from shoes, clothing or skin, although a kerosene-soaked rag may do the trick.

In the midst of these natural wonders is a not-so-beautiful view of the extensive oil drilling and storage facilities of the area. Possibly the earliest commercially developed petroleum deposits in North America, the Carpinteria tar 'seeps' made coastal life in the 16th century possible for the Chumash, the area's earliest recorded inhabitants, supplying villages with a readily available material to waterproof bowls, affix arrowheads and seal the gaps in their planked redwood boats, according to petroleum geologist Edwin Edwards.

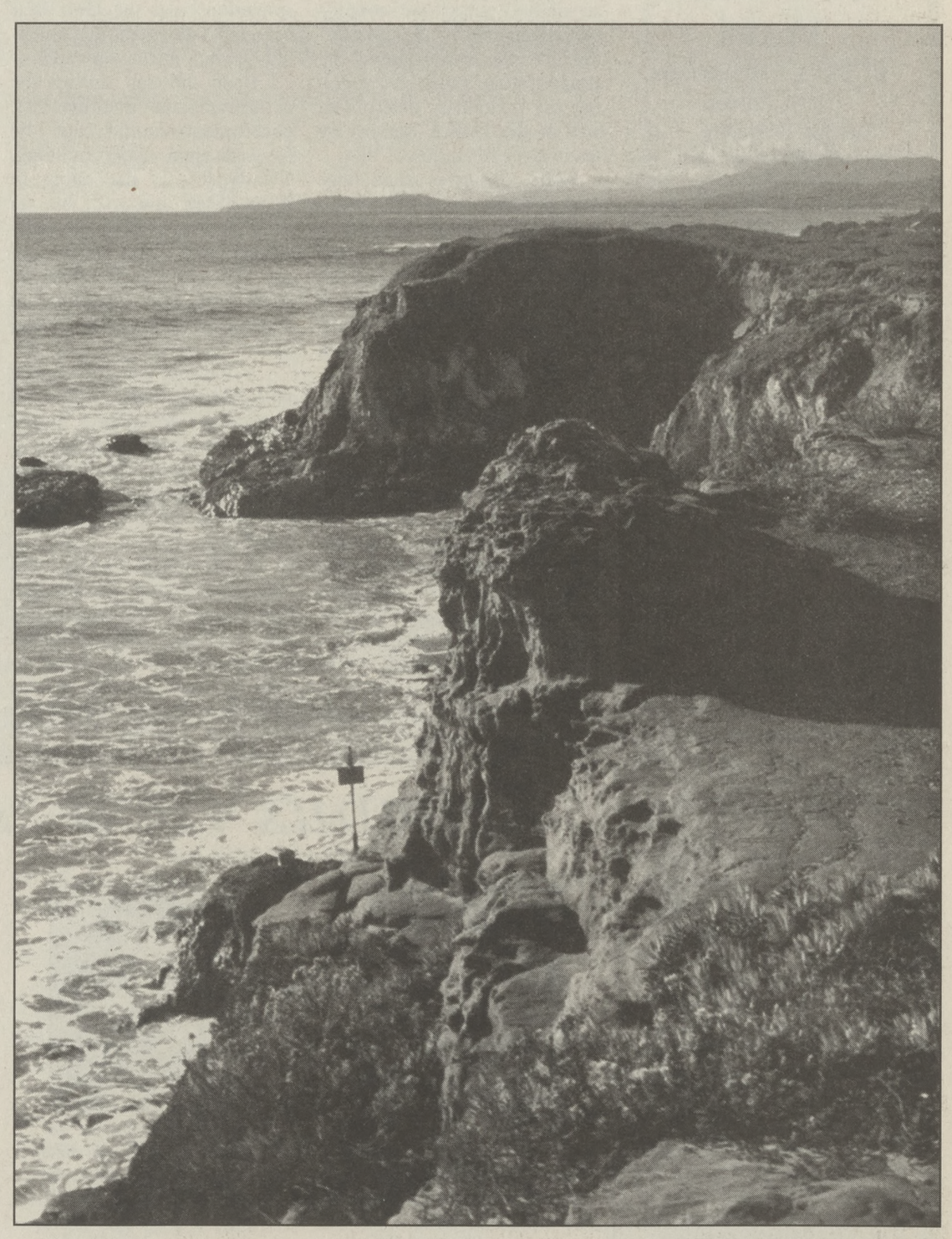
Rich in local history, the California Coastal Trail is a national treasure recognized by the Clinton administration in 1999, the 51st "legacy trail" in the United States.

"In many of the 15 California counties, Coastwalk organizes free day hikes throughout the year," Coastwalk web coordinator Donald Nierlich said. "There is one a month planned for Los Angeles County. We would love to have more students come."

Don't worry about the tar on your shoes. It will come off — or it will stay on as a reminder of the great walk you took along a tiny section of the California Coastal Trail.

The most direct route from Valley College is the 101 freeway west through Ventura, or take the scenic back road — faster during peak traffic times. Take the Golden State (5) Freeway north toward Valencia. Just past Magic Mountain, take the turnoff for the 126 Freeway west. The 126 joins the 101 in Ventura and is the halfway point to Carpinteria. From this juncture, continue on the 101 for a dozen or so miles and exit at Casitas Pass Road, the main entrance to Carpinteria. Turn left off the ramp, proceed to Carpinteria Avenue and turn right, then make quick a left onto Palm Avenue. The beach and day-use parking are straight ahead, just past the railroad tracks.

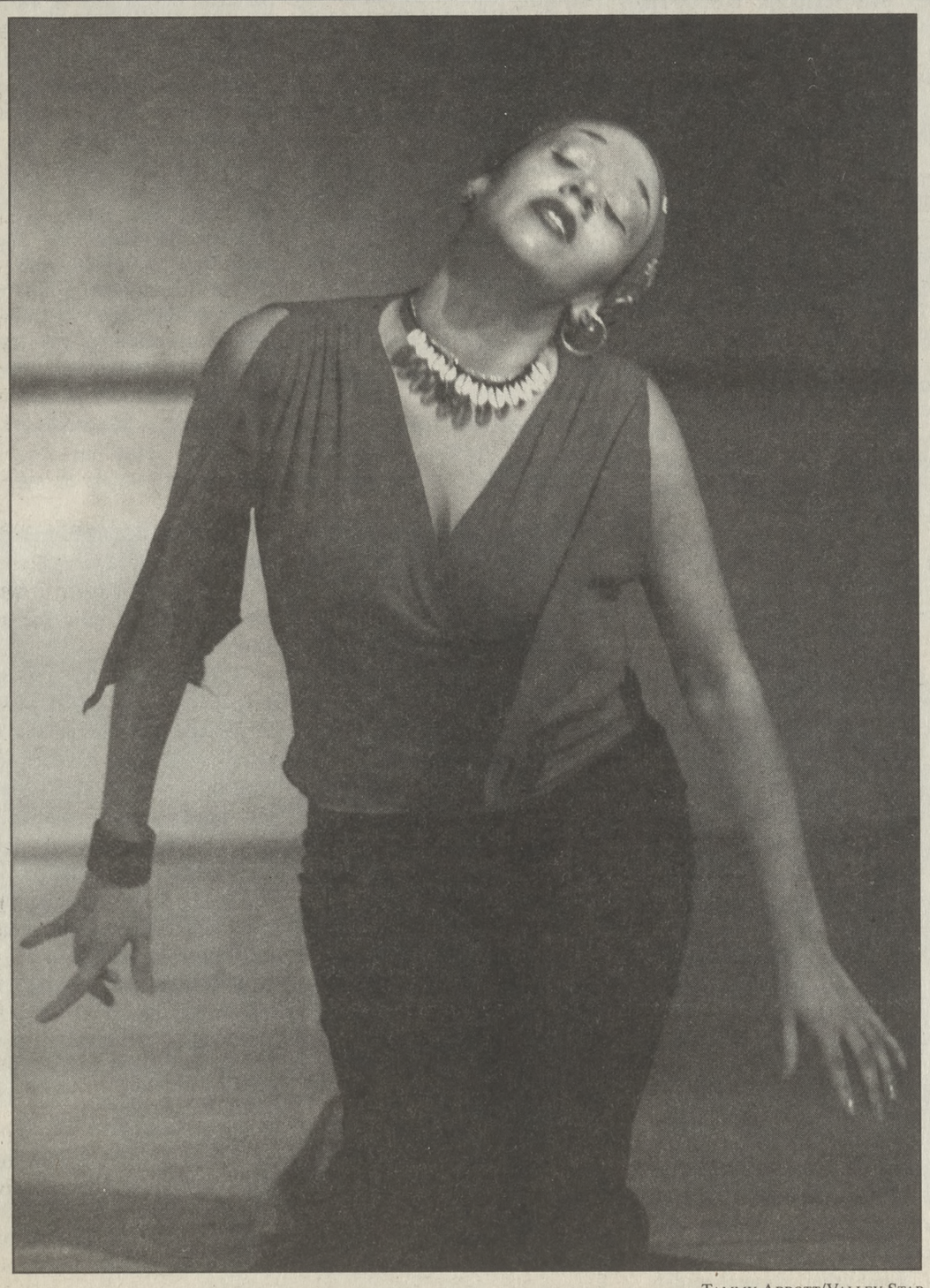
Visit the following websites for more information on the trail and hiking opportunities: www.californiacoastaltrail.info or www.coastwalk.org.



BENJAMIN FAVELA/VALLEY STAR

HIKE ALONG THE OCEAN - Many walking paths are available in Carpinteria along the beach, giving hikers a chance to hike through trees, shrubbery and dried tar runoffs, all along the Pacific Coast.

VALLEY LIFE



TAMMY ABBOTT/VALLEY STAR

STRIKE A POSE - The dance department hosted a recital in the North Gym on Thursday.

FAREWELL FALL 2003

BY TAMMY ABBOTT
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Oven-warm days, the frangrance of oleander has faded away into the early sunset and brought us to the end of the Fall 2003 semester.

Looking back at a tumultuous political environment through the smoke of the biggest fire the San Fernando Valley has seen in a long time, students, faculty and distinguished guests did not let these disruptions distract or detour them here at Valley College.

The music department always has a variety of top-notch guest artists who perform to broaden our musical education and enjoy. Ensembles such as the Valley Symphony Orchestra and the Guitar Ensemble, performed concerts for the students and for the community at large. Choirs are always a wonderful treat during the holidays and there are those in the community who come to enjoyment the holiday cheer with Valley Choir every year.

Drama Department productions included theater department fundraiser "Lion In Winter," directed by Gary Ashton and the comedy "Imaginary Invalid," directed by K.N. Milton.

Looking up into the night sky is always awe-inspiring, which begs many questions. For these, our astronomy department holds many informative lectures and demonstrations which continue to be sold out and provide a valuable asset to the Valley campus. Mars came closer to our planet than it has in 60,000 years. Telescope sales were up, and so was the interest in astronomy. The LAVC Astronomy department will be expanding and renovating.

Valley's media arts recieved the Bronze Telly Award and the 2003 Videographer Award for "In Their Own Words." Professor Joe Daccurso led students in the production of the documentary of successful consumer advocacy for recovering addicts and caretakers at multiple treatment centers in Southern California.

Getting to know students and professors isn't always easy while everyone is busy rushing to their next class, job, or to do homework. Features on just a few of Valley's many special professors — Jennifer Kelly in music, Eugenia Levins in art, Gary Yates in job training and Roger Graham in journalism— offered a glimpse of the varitey of people that make up this diverse community. As did features on unique groups on campus, including the bioinformatics academy, disc jockeys at KVCM, award-winning student artists and the seniors who frequent the fitness center.At the President's Gala in November students, faculty and friends gathered for an evening of dinner and dancing to support the Patron's Association Foundation.

The Valley Star staff photographers and writers take the time to search our community to bring forth stories and pictures of events that often times are free to the public as well as educational, in an effort to give our readers' ideas or perhaps inspiration to attend events throughout the community. Scan the pages of past issues of The Valley Star and vivid text and images will bring you close to the Circle of Bliss at the Los Angeles Country Museum of Art, radio host George Noory and local Law Dogs hot dog stand where legal advice is a complimentary condiment on Wednesday evenings. And in October, we took time out in to recognize a serious issue that affects many, breast cancer, in a series portraying Avon's walk for the cure and the stories of women at stages of the disease.

"Take A Hike" and "Culture On A Dime" were written for the purpose of encouraging our readers to explore their world. Living in California, we are rich in places to go and things to do, remember that song "Downtown" by Petula Clark? It begins, "When you're alone and life is making you lonely you can always go — downtown." Truth and good advice can be found in simple lyrics.

Providing movie and music reviews help to save time and money when there is an extra moment to take a break from our grueling schedules that sometimes eat away at our sanity. There is a place we can escape for at least an hour or two and regroup.

In the Spring 2004, we will continue providing insightful information and compelling images. It has been a privilege to be the editor of "Valley Life," and I hope that you have enjoyed the articles and images we presented.

Film Review

The Best of Most of 2003

BY MICHAEL ORDOÑA
OPINION EDITOR

I begin this list of the best movies of 2003 by saying up front that, at press time, I have not seen several films that may deserve inclusion, among them: "The Lord of the Rings: Return of the King," "The Station Agent," "21 Grams," and "Cold Mountain." Nevertheless:

1. **"City of God"** – This brutal gem came out so early in the year that until recently I had forgotten that it was a 2003 release. Seeing it is like catching lightning in a bottle. It's exciting, shocking, even jaw-dropping (but in a nice way). It's life in a desperately impoverished corner of Brazil, through the eyes of kids. If you haven't seen it yet, you're in luck: It's currently in re-release for Oscar consideration. Fair warning, though — its themes are decidedly adult and there is some Scorsese-type disturbing violence.
2. **"Lost in Translation"** – Some of the best acting of the year is in this surprisingly rich and textured entry by writer-director Sofia Coppola. Bill Murray and Scarlett Johansson display formidable chemistry as two fish very far out of water. *Still in limited release.*
3. **"Bend It Like Beckham"** – Energetic, disarming, fun. A burst of girl power with charm to burn. A similar niche as "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," but British, jazzier and better in every way. *On home video.*
4. **"Matrix Reloaded"** – I'm one of the only people I know who genuinely likes this movie. Sure, the first one is the class of the field and the third one is a flat-out embarrassment, but this one still rocks. At least they tried to make a different kind of sci-fi flick, and it includes the awesome Agent Smiths fight. *On home video.*
5. **"American Splendor"**– Speaking of genre-busting, this one mixes a no-frills, verité style with animated flights of fancy and footage of its real-life subjects. It's the drolly-told story of Harvey Pekar, the anhedonic author of autobiographical underground comic books. Well-acted, interestingly made, memorable. *Not currently available.*
6. **"Dirty Pretty Things"** – Sabotaged by a wrongheaded promotional campaign that pushed the promise of a possibly nude Audrey ("Amélie") Tautou in an erotic thriller, "Dirty Pretty Things" is actually a deliberate, intelligent exposé of the struggles of undocumented immigrant workers in London. Directed with remarkable restraint by Stephen ("Dangerous Liaisons") Frears, the real find here is the film's lead,Chiwetel Ejiofor. *In re-release.*
7. **"The Last Samurai"** – It's "Dances with Wolves" in Japan — an intelligent, progressive western with a thoughtful script, superior technical elements, and a fine cast. It also features some of the best combat scenes of the year. Ken Watanabe deserves Oscar consideration as the charismatic warrior leader. *In wide release.*
8. **"Mystic River"** – Clint Eastwood, Sean Penn, Tim Robbins and company have put together a rich, moving meditation on fate and revenge. A likely Oscar contender in several categories. *In wide release.*
9. **"Thirteen"** – Highly charged and disturbingly authentic. Excellent performances, particularly by Holly Hunter as the struggling mother. *Not currently available.*
10. **"The Magdalene Sisters"** – Infuriating, brutal and based on actual events. *Not currently available.*

There you have it, one writer's opinion. Here are the year's **Top Ten Movies** as determined by the entire staff of The Valley Star:

THE VALLEY STAR'S TOP 10 MOVIES OF 2003:

1. "Finding Nemo"
2. "Seabiscuit"
3. "Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl"
4. "Bend It Like Beckham"
5. "City of God"
6. "Kill Bill Vol. 1"
7. "Bruce Almighty"
8. "Dirty Pretty Things"
9. "The Matrix Reloaded"
10. "Lost in Translation"

BOB TEICHMANN/VALLEY STAR

SNIFF THE MUSIC - A baby chihuahua sniffs the Hollywood Star of 1960's musician Little Jack Little on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on Hollywood Boulevard.

Music Review

The Year in Music

■ Rock and roll slowly let down its hair in 2003, and pop still sucks.

BY PETER O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

The RIAA scared the nation as it attempted to cut back on illegal downloading, rock and roll let down its hair and ticket prices soared. It was a less than satisfactory year in music. Many releases made quality music was a rarity. 2003 left us wondering when the next big thing would come, but it never did — or did it?

Andre 3000 and Big Boi of Outkast released a pair of solo albums as an epic double CD exploring the depths of hip-hop with honest lyrics and unheard of noise. Your neighbor's garage rock band sound from Jack and Meg White of the White Stripes left us all awestruck, Blur released an album worth listening to in its entirety, and Thom Yorke and Radiohead did it again. Coldplay, Travis and Stereophonics all contributed to remarkable listening. In short, the UK dominated the music scene this past 365 days.

What is happening to classic all-American rock and roll bands? The Strokes released a less than satisfactory sophomore album, taking the limelight because nobody else could step into the scene.

Ryan Adams finally released an album expressing his rocking side. And everybody ignored the best-kept secret this year: Damien Rice.

50 Cent, Jay-Z and Ludacris ruled the charts and airwaves.

America failed to discover exciting new bands like Jurassic 5, My Morning Jacket, The Flaming Lips, A Perfect Circle, Kings of Leon, Jet and about 50 other bands worth listening to. Why? They weren't well-distributed.

We can move on to pop side and give them a moment of appreciation but in all honesty, there was none to give this year.

If you listen to Britney Spears, Hillary Duff, Nelly, Good Charlotte and all of those other intolerable bands, you might as well not be reading this.

Music ain't what it used to be. Bands used to make *albums*; you could put a CD in and not worry about getting up to change it for another 70 minutes. There are too many musicians out there distributing trash. Apart from "Think Tank," "Hail to the Thief" and "Speakerboxxx/The Love Below," there weren't many CDs longer than 40 minutes and worth leaving in your player.

2004 is around the corner; you have been at home studying furiously and hoping to get that passing grade. Throughout the next few weeks at home and at work people will be looking for something new to listen to. Don't worry about the music that wasn't provided this year.

Go back to your collection. Throw on Marvin Gaye, The Stones, Dylan, Pet Sounds, The Stooges, Captain Beefheart or Johnny Cash. In need of more choices, there is the "White Album," Morrison and Hendrix. Go back and remember what good music sounds like. Forget 2003 and come by The Valley Star next year if you need some musical guidance. We are all happy to help. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

A Valley College Christmas Carol

(with a tip of the hat to Charles Dickens)

We have endeavored in this Ghostly little tale, to raise the Ghost of an Idea which shall not put the Academic Senate out of humor with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with us. May it haunt their house pleasantly.

-Jeanne C. Rubin (and some other Members of the LAVC Holiday Party Committee)

Oh! But they were tight-fisted hands at the grindstone, they and their colleague, Professor Scrooge! Squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinners! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire. The cold lay within them, and they carried their own low temperature always about with them, and didn't thaw it one degree at the holidays. As for Professor Scrooge, no warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he.

We came to bestow the greetings of the season and invite the Academic Senate to share the holiday season as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time we know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of the campus community members as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on another journey.

Speaking for the Senate, Professor Scrooge said indignantly, "If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with "Happy Holidays" on his lips should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart!" Seeing clearly that it would be useless to pursue our point, we withdrew.

The Academic Senators went their bleak, dark way to their gloomy lounge, dreary enough, for nobody could use it (even to have a bite of lunch) but the Senators and Professor Scrooge

Suddenly, the door flew open with a booming sound, and the Ghost of Academic Senates Past entered and raised a frightful cry, and shook the chain it bore with a dismal and appalling noise. "It is required of every member that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow men, and travel far and wide; and, if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world - - oh, woe is me! - - and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness! I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link-by-link, and yard-by-yard; I girded it on of my own free will. Is its pattern strange to you?"

Not so much in obedience as in surprise and fear, they became sensible of the links in the chain which bound the wretched Ghost - - links made not of issues of academic excellence but rather of undead cats, un-pruned trees, volumes of monstrous gossip, and the piteous plans to spoil the college's holiday party.

"Hear me" cried the Ghost, "I have sat invisible here beside you many and many a Senate meeting. That is no light part of my sentence. I am here to warn you that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping your fate! Mankind is your business; charity, mercy, forbearance, benevolence and letting the college have its holiday party are, all, your business!"

The Senators, trembling and clutching at the Ghost's robe, cried "No, Spirit! Oh, no, no! Hear us! Assure us that we may yet change these chain links by an altered attitude! We promise we will honor the holidays in our hearts and try to keep their spirit all year. We will not interfere with college's warmth and camaraderie! We will not shut out the lessons that they teach of kindness and respect for all of the college's team. Oh, tell us we may sponge away the petty meanness of our ways!"

The Academic Senate and especially Professor Scrooge (the Senator most affrighted by the Ghost) were better than their word. They became good friends to their college brethren. They never again tried to spoil their holiday cheer, and ever after it was always said of them that they knew how to keep the holiday season well.

Red Cross 'Messages' Reunites Local Separated Iraqi Families

■ **Program provides means of communication between U.S. and Iraq.**

By Phillip Robertson
News Editor

The American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles is helping local families contact their loved ones in Iraq.

A program called "Messages" reunited Los Angeles resident Widad Mansour with her sister Layla in the war-torn nation. "I'm safe and sound in Iraq" was the message sent to Mansour from her sister.

Monsour had been trying to reach her sister since the night before Operation Iraqi Freedom began without success, she said. Her sister had sent a message to her through the Red Cross in Iraq.

"I was so happy and relieved Layla was alive," Monsour said. The Red Cross program allowed Mansour to send a reply to her sister.

Messages sent through the Red Cross program can originate overseas on in the United States and are channeled through the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Cross chapters around the world.

"It is an amazing thing to help these families reach each other," said Bob Rich, international services specialist for the ARCGLA. The program has processed 1,137 messages between families in the U.S. and Iraq since April, according to Red Cross figures.

'Cats' *continued from page 2*

very often people who murder animals would likely do it to a human being.

"We are so tolerant of everything around here and have such trust that everything is going to be okay that it took us a long time to get really radical about it," Sullivan said. "In the past there's been a lot of conflict about how to deal with the situation. I think the best thing about today's meeting is that we're coming together as a community. We're finally all on the same page."

The reports have declined over the years due to some underlying fear that has had a ripple effect throughout the campus.

"I have personally heard from at least four people on campus who are classified who will not speak anything about the cat situation," Valley counselor Annabelle Nye said. "Classified people are afraid that if they speak they may lose their job. I don't know how they came to that, but obviously they have some reason to believe it."

Joyce Pieper of Actors and Others advises Valley and other institutions about cat population management, and said the success of this program is depends on the people of the campus.

"We've been working at this for three years. Withholding information from us makes no sense to me," Pieper said. "We want these cats to be protected or we wouldn't have put out so much money, but we don't want to deal with people making sweeping statements if they have no proof for backing it up."

Jeanne Rubin, executive assistant to Valley President Tyree Wieder, said it was with Wieder's leadership that the administration was instrumental in getting the program off the ground when the board of trustees wasn't in favor of it. She also said that other staff members think the issue is not so much about the cats as it is about personal animosity and other agendas.

"One of the things I hear from my peers when the subject comes up about being the eyes of the campus and looking to see if something is amiss is 'Oh, those nuts,' (Sullivan and history professor Jack Arnot) and they discount the reports of animals being killed because they feel these reports aren't true," Rubin said. "These statements have an element of hysteria and what it tends to do is make people believe that there isn't a problem."

Rubin suggested that the academic senate, which passed a resolution on Nov. 20 to help eliminate some of these fears for reporting acts against this feral population, take on the responsibility for reporting any cat activity on campus.

An officer from East Valley Animal Regulations said that his agency will take any humane complaint anonymously and fully investigate it. "Don't let this fear thing work you up into a frenzy," the officer said. "It's not helping you. If you chop yourself off at the waist because you are afraid it may not work, it's not going to. You've got a program set up to call Joyce or Tom or the sheriff, you've got to do it."

Arnot, who is possibly the most passionate about the issue of the cats and has been taking care of them for about four years, has taken an active role in the controversy.

"Jeanne is right. I'm the crazy old man who loves cats and I wouldn't give up," Arnot said. "But I'll tell you one thing: Because of what we've done today, the killing will stop as of right now. There will not be anymore because we sat down around this table and the word will get out."

Actors and Others would like anyone interested in volunteering with their organization to contact Joyce Pieper. Since new cats have been reported on campus they are looking for people interested in trapping cats so that they may be neutered and released.

"You can identify cats that are currently in the TNR program because their right ear has been tipped," Pieper said. "Feral cats keep to themselves, so if you see a cat that is friendly it may very well be a pet cat and we will take it and place it. If you see a cat that looks pregnant or if you come across kittens call us immediately."

The Sheriff's department has agreed to post all reports regarding any cat incident or death on its website so that an accurate record can be kept.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to the reward fund should contact the business office at Valley.

Anyone with information regarding cruelty to animals or a cat you think may not be part of the program is urged to call Actors and Others for Animals at (818) 222-8485, the East Valley Animal Regulations at (818) 756-9323 or the Sheriff's department at (818) 947-2911.

'Fees' *continued from page 2*

Students may qualify for a number of grants and waivers including the board of governor's fee waiver, a state financial aid program, and the Pell Grant Federal program that aids with fees and textbook costs. The CalGrant program is available to students who apply before the March 2, 2004 priority deadline.

Eligibility requirements for grants vary so the college is urging students to apply for grants and financial aid quickly. February is financial aid awareness month but students are advised to educate themselves as soon as possible if they anticipate a problem with fee payment in the 2004-2005 school year.

Valley will soon be implementing new Internet registration technology that allows students to pay by credit card over the web. Credit card Internet registration will be in effect as early as spring 2004.

Students will also be impacted by a $1 health fee increase effective Jan. 1, 2004.

BE IN THE KNOW

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Lisa Raskind is History

By Peter O'Connor
Staff Writer

The Valley College history department is losing a 25-year veteran and colleague to retirement.

Lisa Raskind is the type of professor who cares deeply for her students. She knows that the type of attention she gives is unavailable to students at the university level. Her efforts are truly worth appreciating.

Raskind received her doctorate in the history of religions at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Valley was her final destination. Arriving in 1979, Raskind knew she had found a place where she could make a difference.

"Students need good teachers especially at the two-year college level," Raskind said. "I've had numerous students return from the universities and tell me this is where they gained the most knowledge; that's what matters to me."

The retirement is not the end to Raskind's teaching career. She will be returning to Valley next semester to teach one class and stay on top of her field of study. With a husband commuting to and from San Francisco, two children, Raskind said she is ready to try something new.

"It's time for a change," explains Raskind. "I will be able to see more of my family and continue to do what I love at the same time."

'Astro' *continued from page 1*

"Much of the excitement is in the debate," Laderman said. "One of the best things you can ever do is think."

The standing theory of the origin of universe points to the Big Bang, the so-called start of space-time in which the source for all that is was created. Some say it was the start of time simply because all things began at that point, and there is no end in sight. Others believe it is simply a matter of… time.

Evidence showing the dawn of time comes in various forms. One thought is the activity of stellar supernovas. In the 11th century, a stellar body was observed as suddenly becoming massive, then dim and dead. The coordinates today point observers to the Crab Nebula, a gas and debris cloud twice the mass of this system's star. The rate and type of observable decay, change and radio noise seem to confirm observations from almost one millennium ago.

Of course, if there indeed was a Big Bang, there naturally would have to be a center. In 1929, observations made by Edwin Hubble contented that velocities of galaxies result from a general expansion of the universe.

In search of more scientific evidence, Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson were the first to detect the radiation left over from the "creation event." in 1965. Today, the Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe (WMAP) is used to track signals from the big bang with an idea similar to that of Penzias and Wilson in which various levels of radio had to be detected.

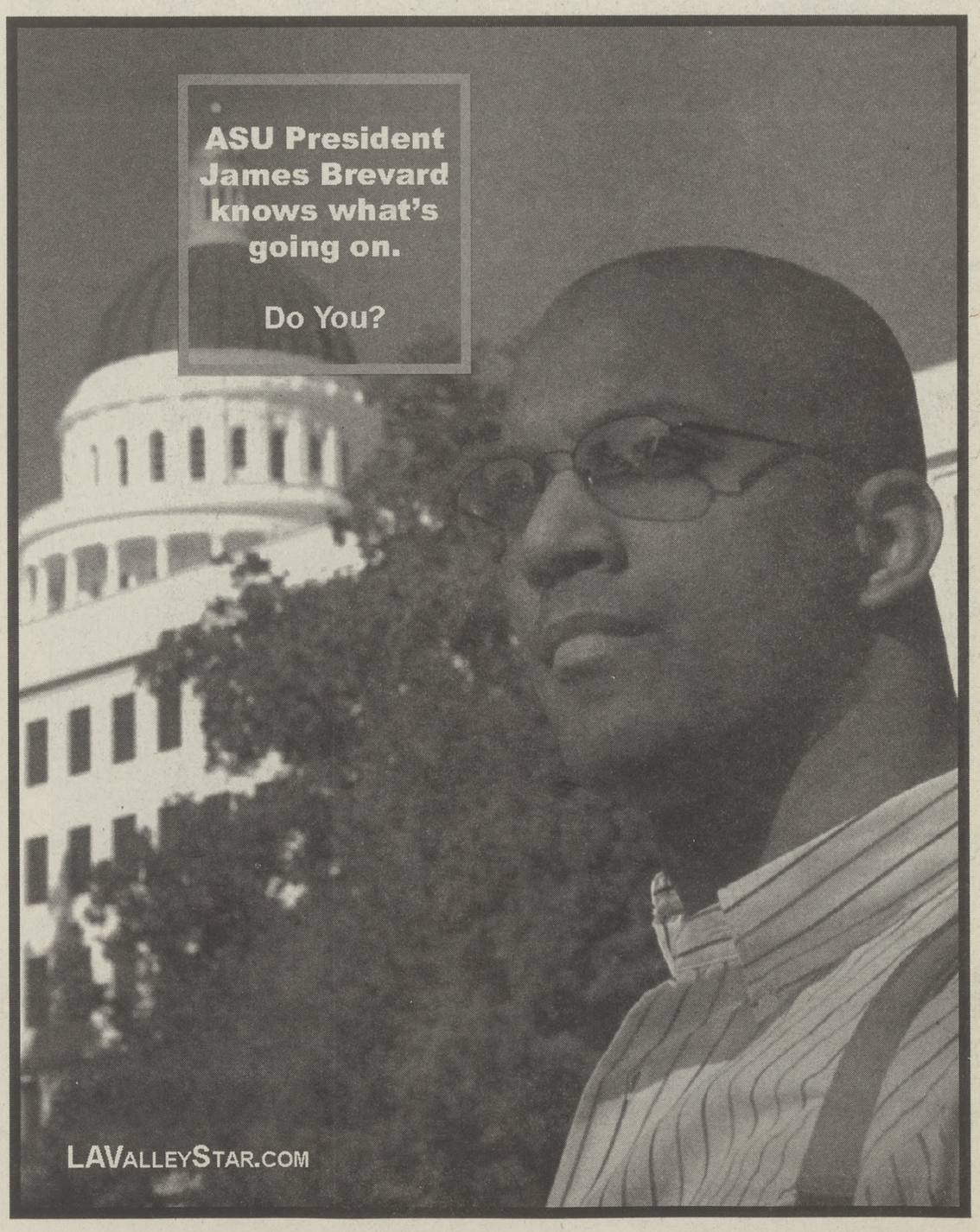
Effects from the Big Bang have theoretically left 30 percent dark matter throughout the universe, namely in galaxies after formation. In layman's terms, dark matter can be described as interstellar stucco, holding arms of galaxies in place and preventing them from breaking apart (our own galaxy stretches 75,000 light years across).

The theory of bending space comes into place when interstellar travel is brought up. Using the idea of existence of black holes (singularities that tractor in anything within reach), suggestions point to one black hole leading to another, typically called a wormhole. These wormholes are thought to bend space, and perhaps tweak with temporal law.

What about time travel? World-renowned expert of interstellar and temporal mechanics Dr. Steven Hawkings made his opinion on the idea clear when he said, "I'm still waiting to hear from the future."

One standing theory is that time is infinite, and a Big Bang is both the beginning and the end of this universe… and perhaps time.

"The fun is in asking questions," Laderman said. "The benefit is in opening up our minds."



'Kwanzaa' *continued from page 1*

with the black, then the red and lastly, the green. The order conveys that the people come first, followed by the struggle and then the hope.

In keeping with tradition the ceremony began with a call to ancestors to be present for the celebration; audience members called on deceased relatives and for each water was sprinkled symbolically from a tambiko, a unity cup. Each host explained a portion of the ceremony: The mkeka, a place mat symbolic of the foundation, history and traditions that bind people together; mazao, a bowl of fruits and vegetables to represent the successful harvest; zawadi, gifts given to children for living according to Kwanzaa values; and the muhundi, ears of dry corn (one for each child) to represent to dream of parents that their children and future generations will grow strong. They then lit the seven candles and invited the audience to join them for refreshments.

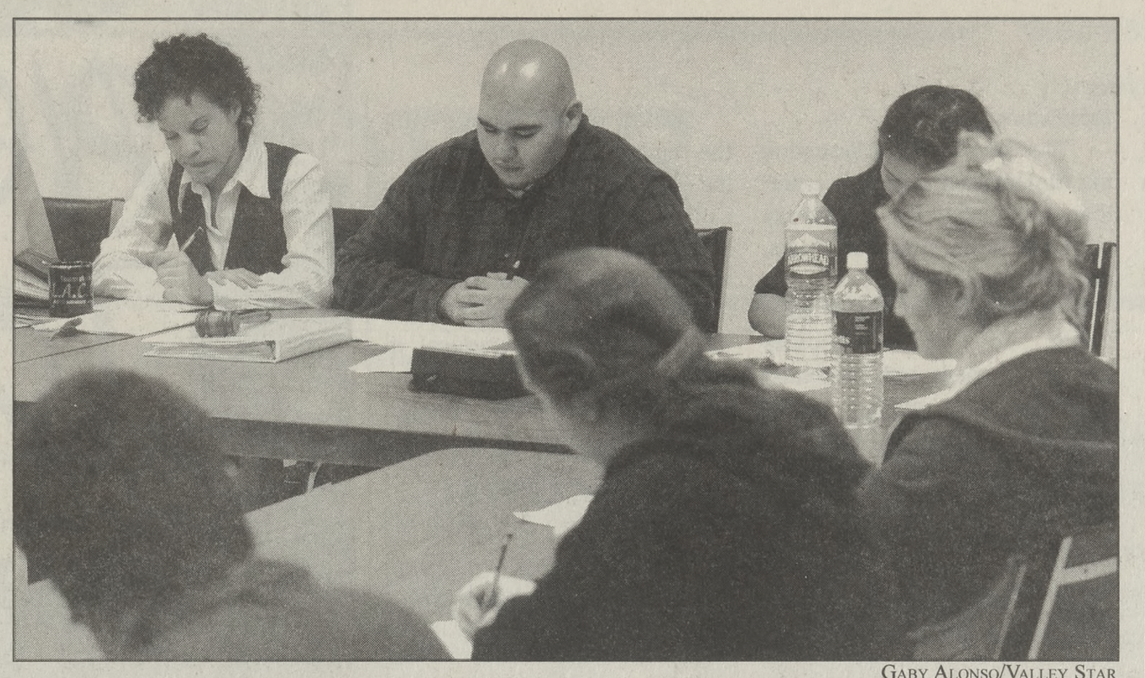
"It was very consistent with the tradition of fellowship and bringing people together and a reflection on roots of our ancestors," audience member Jason Camp said. "I've attended other Kwanzaa ceremonies, and this was accurate."

Following the ceremony, Paula Thomas, a friend of BSU member Michelle Hairston, performed an African dance complete with headdress and bare feet, to "Heart of the Dancer" by Johnny Clegg and Juluka.

"I liked the whole presentation," Charnai Daniels said, "It was my first time seeing a Kwanzaa ceremony."

TAMMY ABBOTT/VALLEY STAR

BODY LANGUAGE- Paula Thomas performs an African dance in the fireside room Thursday after the Black Student Union's Kwanzaa celebration.



GABY ALONSO/VALLEY STAR

MEETING IN PROGRESS- Associated Student Union Adviser Sherri Rodriguez, Vice President Erick Iniguez and the rest of the ASU review minutes from the previous meeting during a discussion on the plans for rallying students against budget cuts in the spring.

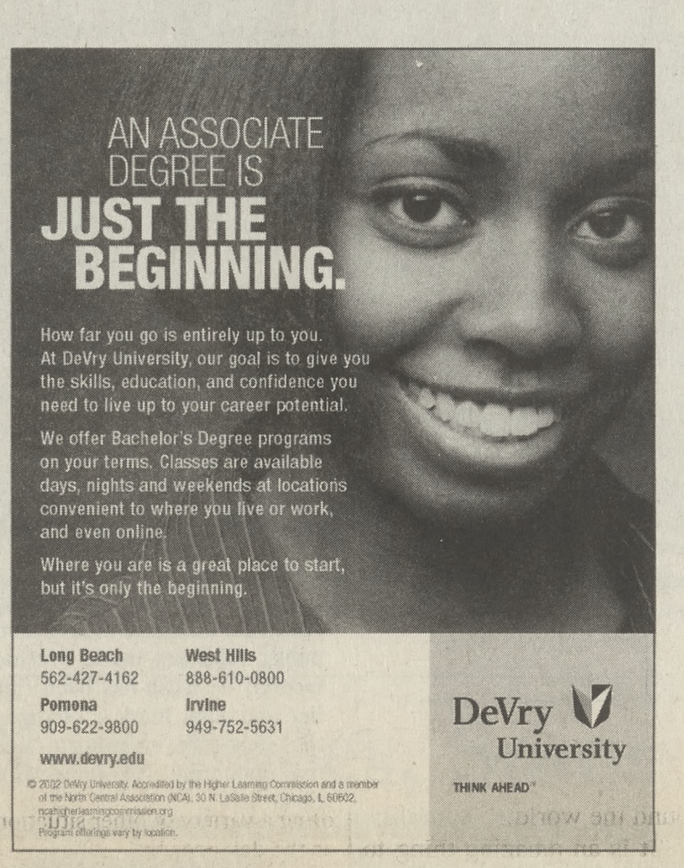
'ASU' *continued from page 1*

from Mona Field, President of the Los Angeles Community College District Board of Trustees, to discuss points of the recall election. Other fall semester highlights for the ASU include a successful Dean's reception, many well-attended club days and club nights and a visit to assemblyman Llyod Levine's office to represent students against the budget cuts.

The team has also worked to round out its staff, which started with just four members, president James Brevard, vice president Erik Iniguez, treasurer Alvaro Vasquez and Igor Kagan, commissioner of political affairs. At the end of the semester the ASU is left with one open position, that of chief justice.

In an effort to keep students informed, the ASU has taken new approaches. "I have developed the ASU website," said Daly Sorvongsavanh, ASU commissioner of public relations. "It's something we've been looking forward to." The website is expected to be accessible sometime in the spring semester.

"I did all I could [this semester]," Kagan said. "All of us did. I don't feel that we could have done anything different."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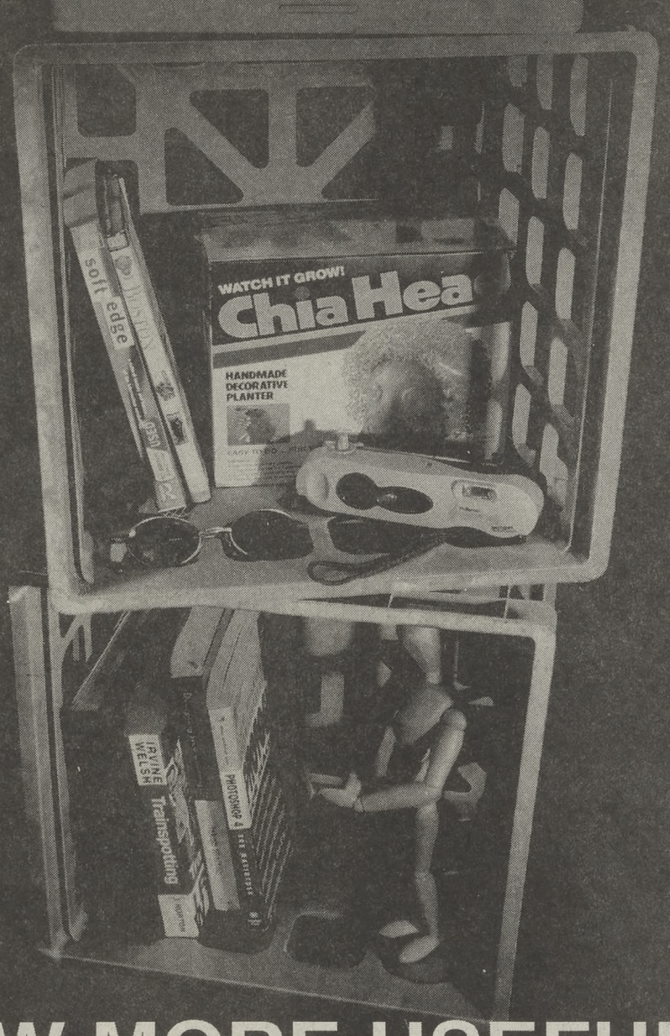

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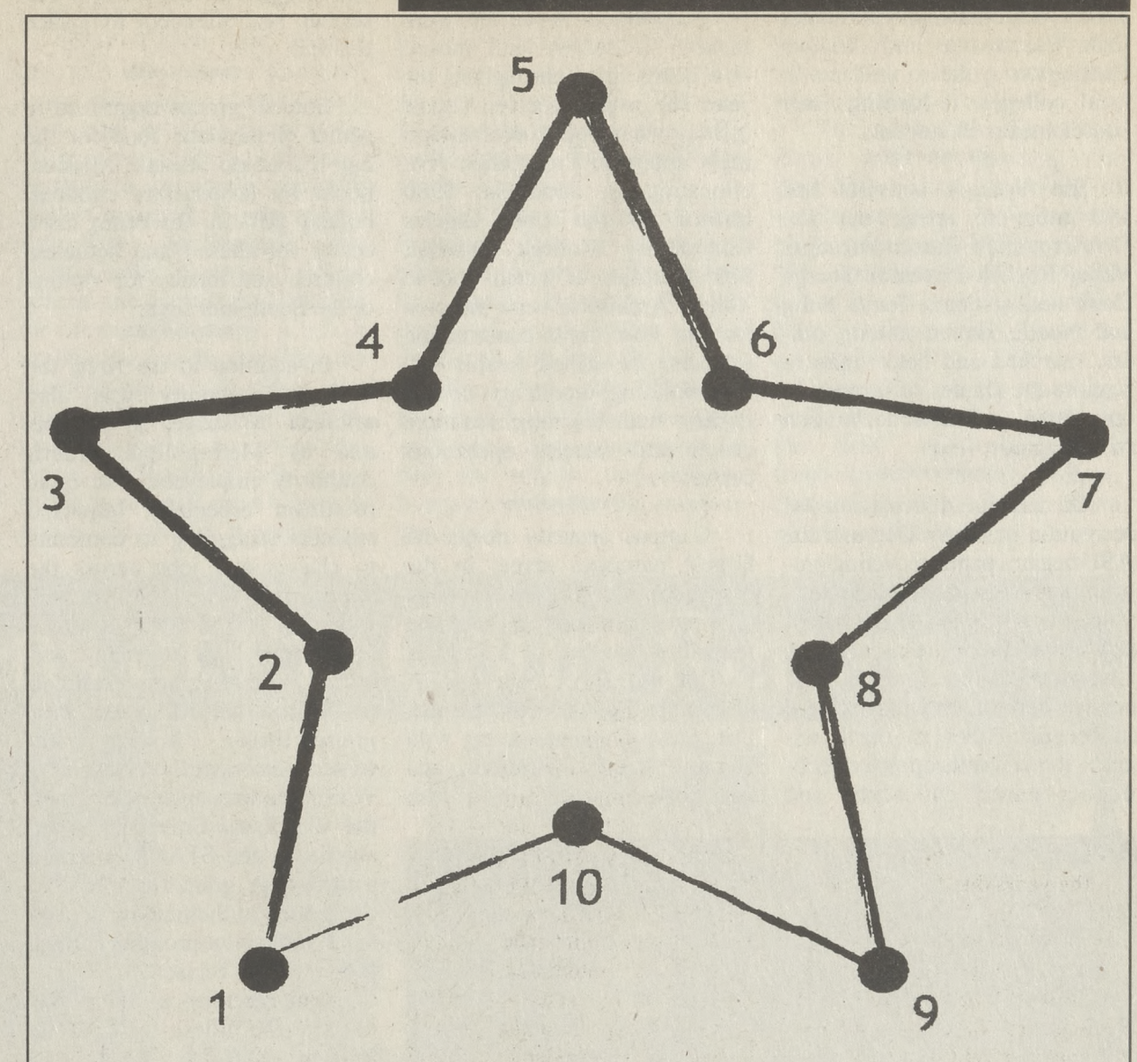

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'Rape' *continued from page 2*

tion their own decision-making process. "Self-blame and guilt are one of the biggest issues in acquaintance rape."

The use of 'date-rape' drugs has increased in recent years, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Rohypnal, also known as ruffies or roachies, and Gamma-Hydroxybutrate (GHB), commonly called gamma-oh, liquid ecstasy and Georgia-home-boy, the two most common drugs used for this crime, are playing an ever-increasing factor in sexual assault crimes. Rohypnol is 10 times stronger than Valium and can begin to work in less than 30 minutes and last up to eight hours. It can impair judgment and motor skills and leave a victim unable to resist a sexual attack. GHB, a depressant, affects the central nervous system and is most commonly found in liquid form.

"We get quite a few calls on our hot line from women who believe they have been drugged and raped," Prince said. "The woman knows something has happened to her but she can't recall parts of the evening because of the blackout effects of the drug. It's really scary for these women."

The increase of information via the Internet makes it easier than ever to find the ingredients to make these types of drugs, according to Prince.

"It's easier to make than Nestle Toll House cookies because it's made with household cleaners, pretty much," Prince said. "It's odorless, colorless and easy to slip into a drink when no one is looking."

The San Fernando Valley has the highest rape incidence in California, according to police statistics. The Valley Trauma Center is the largest rape crisis center serving the San Fernando and Santa Clarita valleys and offers multilingual services to accommodate diverse communities. The center operates a 24-hour crisis hotline (818) 886-0453 and has information available at www.valleytraumacenter.org. Services include hospital accompaniment for victims, assistance from a five-person sexual assault response team, counseling, group support for significant others and violence prevention education funded by the California Office of Criminal Justice. All services are free of charge.

Valley College, along with the eight other campuses in the Los Angeles Community College District, recently set up a campus response team that will give students an outlet to report any sexual violence. The team is devising a protocol to aid victims of this type of crime. The team includes Yasmin Delahoussaye, vice president of Student Services, Kathleen Sullivan, director of disabled students programs and services, Carl King, psychological services counselor, Nicholas Wade, administration of justice instructor, counselor Bruce Thomas and Tashini Walker, international student counselor.

Sheriff's Department detective Steve Gutierrez advises that victims of rape to "call [the] local police department and preserve any evidence, such as clothing items."

"Don't shower and go right to the hospital and tell them you think you have been raped and they will call the local agency for you," Gutierrez said. "If you have any discharging, try to preserve that in a tissue because we can get DNA from that."

These tips could protect potential victims:

- **Keep a close eye on your drink**
- **If you step away, have a friend watch your drink or take it with you**
- **Watch the bartender prepare your drink**
- **Eat before you go to a club or before you drink and watch your intake**
- **Do not accept a drink from a stranger**
- **Drink from a bottle, if possible**

Information supplied by Stephanie Prince of the Valley Trauma Center and the National Institute on Drug Abuse

'News' *continued from page 1*

Davis vetoed the controversial SB328, proposed to award fee waivers to undocumented immigrants. Gubernatorial candidates Cruz Bustamante and Arianna Huffington spoke to students at local colleges, re-igniting voter consciousness in students.

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But Valley's activists had still more to speak out for. District trustee Warren Furutani, Valley English Professor George Cook and students Tonya Selig and Noelle Halter, among others, marched and held vigils to reignite the flames of protest, in opposition to Bush's declaration of war against Iraq.

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On campus, students enjoyed recreation in Lion's Den and the ASU began a paper-recycling program and encouraged students to voice their opinions about school policies and construction plans. Under new contract stipulations, several departments participated in beneficial merges. Earth science joined anthropology, economics joined philosophy and sociology merged with American cultures.

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Proposition A-funded work kicked off swiftly and moved at a hearty pace throughout the year. The project received a boost in May when voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition AA, allocating an additional $980 million to the Los Angeles Community College District, $105.4 million of which went to Valley. Architects were selected for the four main construction projects, the allied health science building, media arts center, library and learning resource center and campus operations center.

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Campus security made the largest narcotics arrest in the history of the college, recovering a large amount of crystal methamphetamine in a campus parking lot E in February. A star football player was arrested. Det. Steve Gutierrez along with Deputy Randy Tuinstra and his steadfast crew dealt with a rash of restroom vandalism, suspected cat murders, a series of auto burglaries and brought one serious sex offenders to justice this fall.

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Student groups organized to gather clothes and food for the San Fernando Rescue Mission, books for hospitalized children, holiday gifts for the Penny Lane center for abused and homeless children and money for victims of the Southland fires.

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In addition to the fires, the Valley community was also affected by strikes at markets and by Metropolitan Transit Authority employees. The issue of travel especially impacted students struggling to commute to classes and jobs across the valley.

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Despite cuts to many services, several grants awarded to Valley helped many programs thrive. Toiling grant writers successfully obtained a Workforce Investment Act grant, the Woodbury University grant, another to the STARS program, a three-year grant from NASA, two grants to the nursing department and one to promote college literacy from Verizon.

And reaching to serve students to the fullest, the LACCD Student Affairs Committee set forth a resolution urging California's lawmakers to investigate practices of the six major textbook publishers for consistently raising prices and printing new editions without substantial justification.

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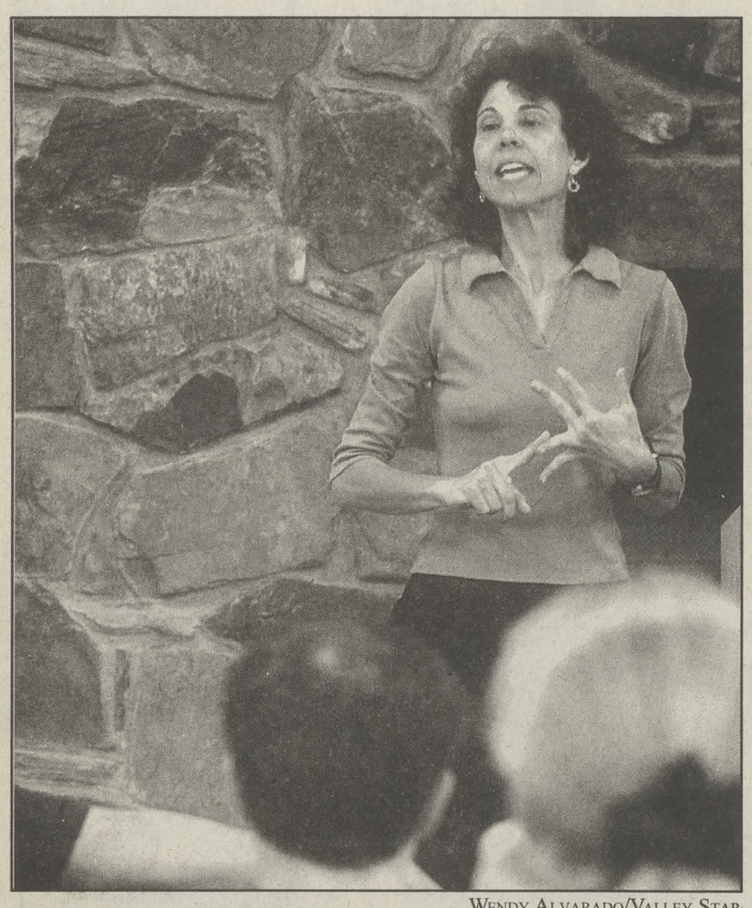
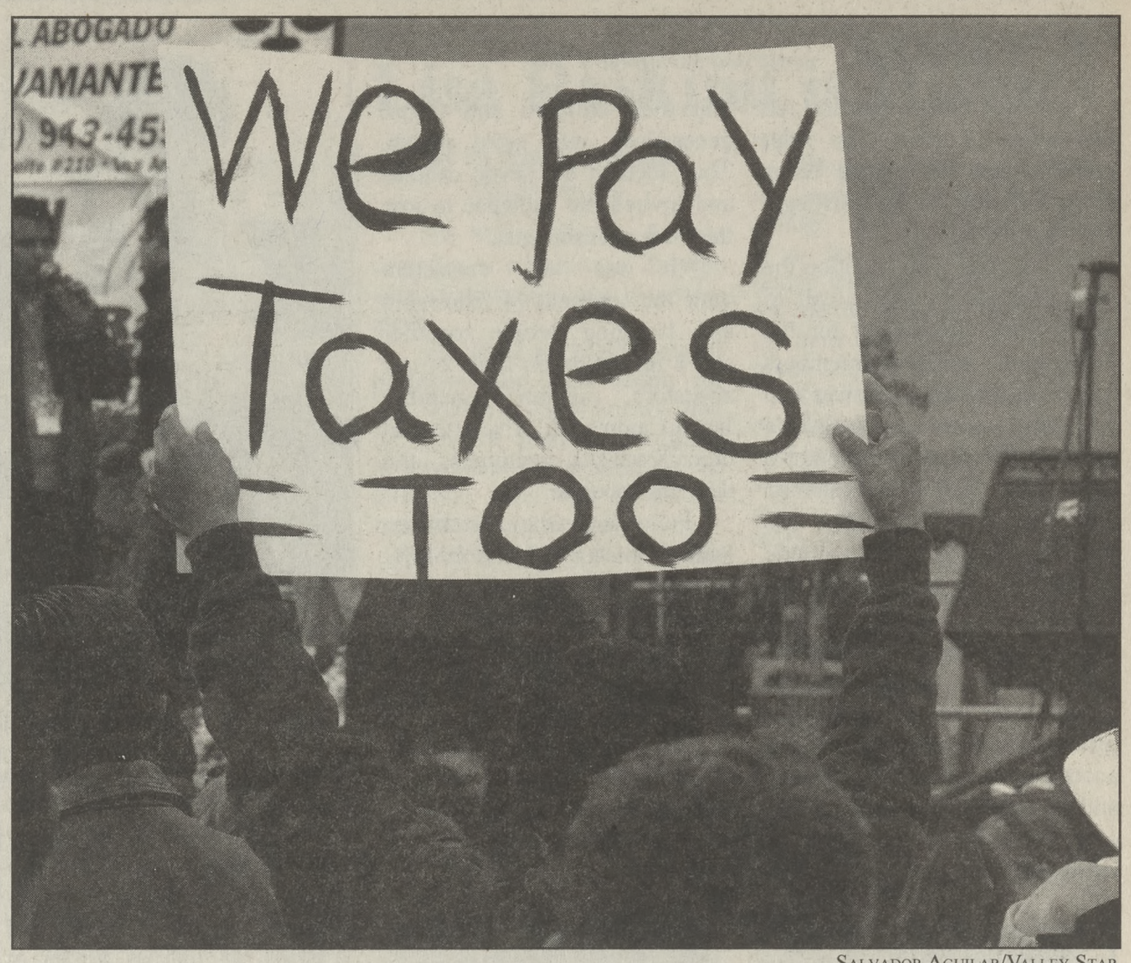
Although the rise in tuition and other budgetary consequences led to a drop in enrollment for Valley and many other California community colleges, Valley still ushered 1343 students into the world with degrees or certificates in the 2002-2003 school year. This semester there are 465 graduation applicants.

The Valley Star looks forward to reporting another exciting year in 2004. Pick up the Star again in February as Valley's journalism students continue to strive to bring the community accurate news and interesting features.



WENDY ALVARADO/VALLEY STAR

FIRESIDE CHAT- Mona Field, president of the LACCD Board of Trustees, lectures about consequences of the recall Sept. 29.



SALVADOR AGUILAR/VALLEY STAR

WORK STOPS- Latinos held a demonstration during the Virgin of Guadalupe celebration at Olvera Street Friday to protest the repeal of SB60. Latinos were urged to stay home and not spend money or go to work.

'2003' *continued from page 1*

removal of the Hussein government.

On April 1, U.S. forces rescued Pvt. Jessica Lynch from her Iraqi captors. Lynch returned to stateside amid flag-waving, accolades and an appearance on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno." More than 500 coalition troops have been killed since the start of hostilities. More than 300 of those deaths came after the May 1 announcement of the end of major combat exercises.

Coalition forces captured the former Iraqi dictator hiding out in a "spider hole" near his hometown of Tikrit Dec.13.

The capture of Hussein marked a dramatic victory in the public relations battle President George W. Bush has been fighting and may mark a change in the Democrat's platform during the upcoming November elections.

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Here in California, the second successful recall of a governor in U.S. history and the devastating firestorms transformed the landscape both politically and physically. In October, a groundswell of support by a disgruntled electorate forced the unpopular Gov. Gray Davis out and inaugurated Arnold Schwarzenegger as the new leader of the state. The governor-elect faced criticism late into the campaign for allegations of inappropriate conduct with several women.

Schwarzenegger's first act in office was to repeal the controversial increase in the vehicle license fee. Shortly after the historic recall election, Schwarzenegger joined forces with the lame duck Davis' administration in combating the fires that swept across much of the Southland.

The fires that stretched from the Mexican border to the Simi Valley region destroyed more than 1,500 homes and killed 20 people. The economic impact of the Southland fires has yet to be determined. The challenge for the Schwarzenegger administration will be to adhere to his campaign pledges not to increase taxes. Gov. Schwarzenegger and the state legislature passed a new budget proposal this month and the governor has proposed a bond issue to eliminate the enormous $38 billion budget deficit.

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Legal troubles also made headlines all year. Kobe Bryant, Michael Jackson, Scott Peterson, Rush Limbaugh, Rep. Bill Janklow (R-S.D.), Bobby Brown, R. Kelly, Phil Spector, Robert Blake, Martha Stewart and Courtney Love all had run-ins with the law, while the world faced the SARS and flu epidemics.

SPORTS

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WSC MEN'S BASKETBALL

Consolation Championship Slips Through nets

■ **Monarchs advance to the consolation championship game at the Riverside College Tournament, but are turned down in a four-point loss.**

BY JAYSON ADDCOX
SPORTS EDITOR

The Monarchs basketball team bounced back from a first-game defeat against Pasadena City College in the Riverside Community College Holiday Basketball Tournament with consecutive victories, only to lose to San Bernardino in the consolation game, 63-59.

"We played real tough defense," assistant head coach Kenny Williams said of the final game. "We made a few bad decisions down the stretch that cost us the game in the end."

The Monarchs may have played their best game of the season in the losing effort. The team put together a solid defensive effort with enough offense to have a chance to win at the end.

"We played together as a team," guard Kenneth Eatmon said. "We were all focused and we were on the same page." However, a couple of turnovers with only four minutes left in the game and a few missed opportunities led to the loss to the San Bernardino Wolverines.

Sophomore point guard Carlos Rivers led the Monarchs with 12 points and redshirt freshman Casey Bednash had seven rebounds. The Wolverines shot 43.4 percent from the field and combined for 12 steals and four blocks. Sophomore point guard Johnny Dukes led the Wolverines with 12 points and nine rebounds.

"The tournament was a good test for us," Head Coach Jay Werner said. "It showed us that we could rise to the occasion after the first game loss."

The Monarchs went 2-2 in the tournament and carry an overall record of 4-6.

The Monarchs dropped the first game to Pasadena, 73-55. They then logged back-to-back wins by defeating Imperial Valley College 70-68 in overtime behind the 3-point shot of Curtis Isom and hammering Palomar College 63-59.

"These games are important, but conference play is what counts," guard Curtis Isom said.

The Monarchs will participate in the Crown City Classic Tournament in Pasadena today through Friday.

"It should be an exciting tournament; we have the possibility to play Pasadena College again," Werner said.

JORDAN DINAPOLI/VALLEY STAR

IN THE MIDDLE - Monarch forward Casey Bednash, middle, attempts to escape from two Imperial Valley Arabs to get off a pass at Riverside College Dec. 11.

MEN'S BASKETALL
Los Angeles Valley College
Western State Conference
Upcoming Schedule

Opponent	Date	Time
@ Pasadena	12/17-19	tba
@ Santa Ana	12/27-29	tba
@ L.A. Pierce	1/3	7 p.m.
Canyons	1/7	7:30 p.m.
Citrus	1/9	7:30 p.m.
@ Glendale	1/14	7:30 p.m.
@ Bakersfield	1/16	7:30 p.m.
West L.A.	1/21	7:30 p.m.
B Y E	1/23	7:30 p.m.
Santa Monica	1/28	7:30 p.m.
@ Canyons	1/30	7:30 p.m.
@ Citrus	2/4	7:30 p.m.
Glendale	2/6	7:30 p.m.
Bakersfield	2/11	7:30 p.m.
@ West L.A.	2/13	7:30 p.m.
B Y E	2/18	7:30 p.m.
@ SMC	2/20	7:30 p.m.
Reg. Playoffs	2/27	tba
Reg. Playoffs	3/3	tba
Reg. Finals	3/6	tba
State Finals @ UCSD	3/13	tba

SPORTS SEMESTER IN REVIEW

Rise and Fall

BY JAYSON ADDCOX
SPORTS EDITOR

As the fall semester ends, Valley College's sports teams are wrapping up seasons of varying degrees of success.

The Lady Monarchs water polo team captured the school's only conference title, taking the Western State Conference with a record of 23-5 overall and 7-0 against WSC foes. The team dominated behind the play of standout sophomores Megan Winchell and Jessie Stiles, who scored 104 and 61 goals respectively. The Lady Monarchs finished the season ranked No. 6 in the state and fell one game short of the state championship.

"We had an awesome season," Winchell said. "I'm proud of all of us, we stepped it up and held our own all season."

The men's water polo team didn't quite reach the same heights, but fell only one win short of a playoff spot, finishing 14-16 and third in the conference. "We played some solid teams this year," Head Coach Jon Conrad said. "The guys played hard."

The Monarchs' football team limped through a rough season marred by controversy off the field and underachievement on it. The offense struggled all year long, finishing near the bottom of the league in most categories. It didn't help that line suffered injuries all season long and that several players were kicked off the roster for violations of team rules including drug-related offenses. The team finished 1-9 overall and 0-7 in league play.

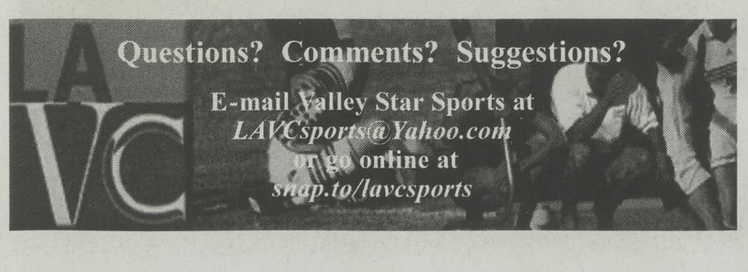
"We weren't very good," Head Coach Ron Ponciano said. "We've got to get better. Players have got to train harder in the off-season and not get in trouble."

The offense was led by running back Edric Prim, who finished with 915 yards. The defense boasted defensive end Rashaad Goodrum (70 tackles, 4 sacks; unanimous all-conference selection) and sophomore safety D'Andre Good, who led the team with 71 tackles.

"It's a disappointment," Good said. "It's humbling. It's a growing pain in my athletic career."

Under new Head Coach Eric Archila, the women's soccer team jumped out of the gate nicely but sputtered towards the end of the season. They finished with 8-9-5, fourth in the conference. The Lady Monarchs were led by Friday Camaclang and Vicky Granados, both with11 goals. Camaclang also led the team in assists with five. Goalkeeper Mariel Gonzales was solid on net, including a blocked penalty kick among her many highlights.

The men's and women's basketball teams are off to uncertain starts, with 4-6 and 6-7 records, respectively. Guard Carlos Rivers is the men's early scoring leader, with DaShawn Strong bringing down most of the boards. For the women, Syreeta Coleman is the top scorer and Roxy Quintero dishes out the lion's share of the assists.



New Faces, Some High Expectations

■ **Men's basketball returns to the hardwood with the same goals as usual: conference championship and a playoff run.**

BY JAYSON ADDCOX
SPORTS EDITOR

The men's basketball team enters the 2003-2004 season poised to make another run at the Western State Conference title despite the retirement of their head coach of 10 years, Doug Michelson.

"It's going to be different," assistant head coach Kenny Williams said. "Some strategy may change, but the goals, morals and structure are the same."

The 2002-2003 Monarchs won a fourth straight conference title. Unfortunately, their run for the state championship ended in a loss to L.A. Southwest in the Sweet Sixteen of the state tournament.

Head Coach Jay Werner has only six players returning from last year's championship team, and although the team is off to a rough start (4-6) he is excited to see which freshman players are ready to step up and contribute. Sophomore point guard Carlos Rivers is the floor general and expected to be key to the Monarchs' success. A trio of sophomore guards step into the limelight this season adding a lot of versatility to this year's squad. Curtis Isom is an all-around threat, DaShawn Strong is an inside force and Kenneth Eatmon brings speed and eagerness to distribute the ball.

"This team is young. The key is to take one game at a time, and respect each opponent that we play," Werner said. "We need to all get on the same page early in the season to be successful in conference play."

The Monarchs feature nine freshmen, four of whom are expected to play a large role this season. Forwards Rendell Pegg and Jayme Miller anchor the bench and hope to produce on the front line. Redshirt freshman guard Casey Bednash will be a key component in both the offense and defense is expected to play big minutes this year.

"I'm just looking to contribute to the team," Bednash said. "I just want to help the team win five conference championships in a row."

The Monarchs know that teams will be gunning for them this season, especially in conference play. "We have a bull's eye on us," Williams said. "The conference is always tough but with our past conference championships every team is going after us."

According to the coaching staff the teams to watch in the WSC this season are front-runners Citrus College, Bakersfield, West L.A., Santa Monica and Glendale.

Queens of the Court Return

BY BOB TEICHMANN
STAFF WRITER

The Lady Monarchs carried themselves to the Elite Eight at the California College Basketball Finals in the 2002-2003 season. With four players returning to the current lineup, they're hoping to make another appearance.

Erika and Tiffanie Hamilton

Sister guards out of Los Angeles attended Taft High School together and play together again, this time in their second season with the Lady Monarchs.

Rotating positions from starter to second string and back again, the Hamiltons have improved over last season. They are rebounding machines, pulling down 10 rebounds between them in a game against DeAnza College Dec. 4.

Denise Wilson

Wilson comes in from Carson with an ability to play various positions and shoot from almost anywhere on the court.

In any given game, Wilson will play forward or center, bringing with her an excellent shooting touch and strong rebounding power.

Wilson had a drought from the free throw line last season. That hasn't carried over, as she shot 70 percent from the line in her first five games this season.

Syreeta Coleman

A guard out of Chandler, Ariz., Coleman is the heart of the current lineup after being a key component to last season's success.

"Her energy and fire is endless," Head Coach Mike Muro said.

Coleman missed the first two weeks of play this season due to a family emergency in Chicago, but has lost none of her potency. She finished her first game back with 10 points, seven assists, four steals and four rebounds.

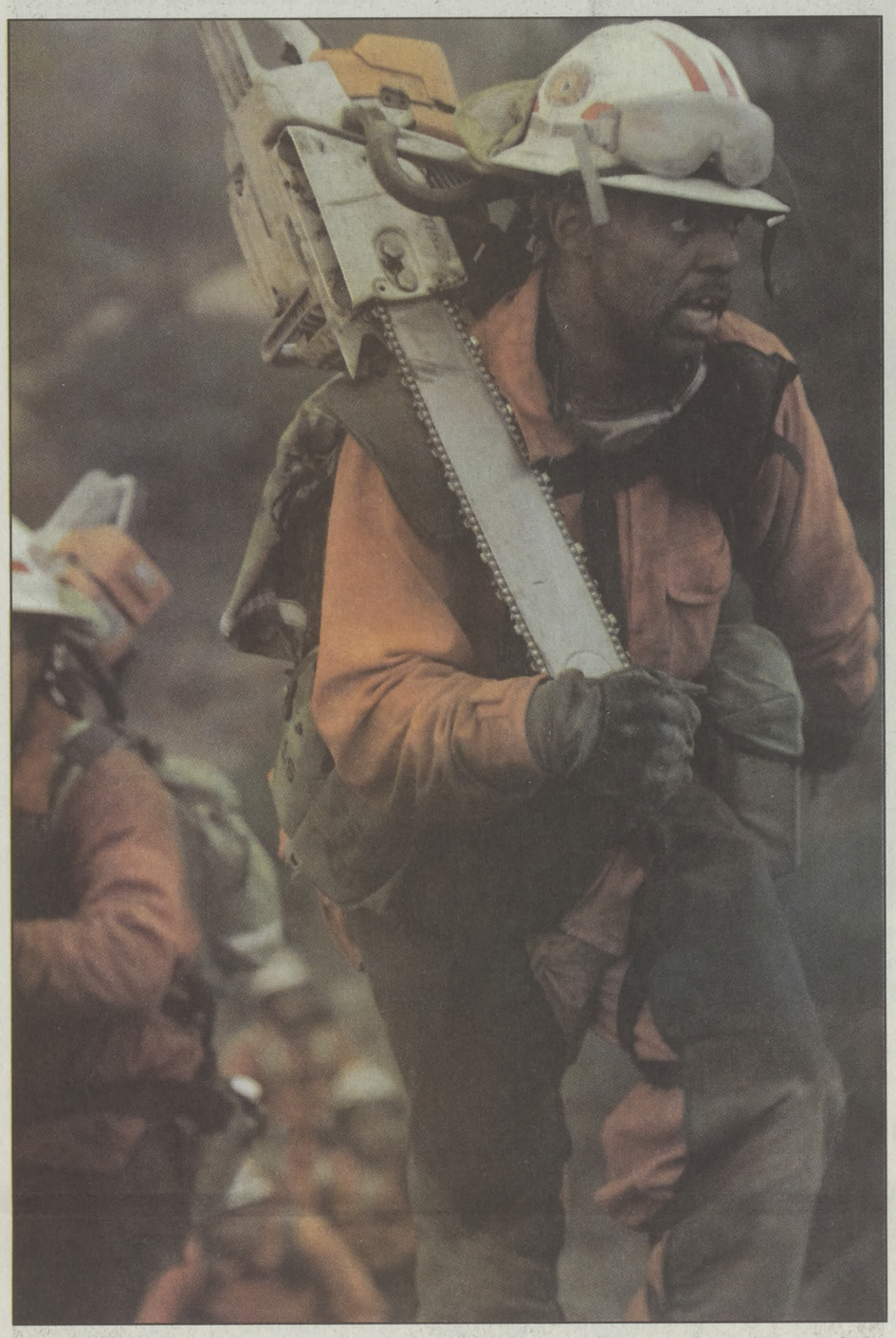
"We have a younger team this season," Muro said. "But with the girls we have back now, we'll have a better time getting our game to the level we want it."

BOB TEICHMANN/VALLEY STAR

QUEENS - L to R: Erika Hamilton, Denise Wilson and Tiffanie Hamilton return to the Lady Monarchs' Basketball team in an attempt to win a third consecutive conference championship.

GALLERY

PRESENTING THE QUINTESSENTIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC QUINTET



TAMMY ABBOTT/VALLEY STAR

HEADED TO SAFE GROUND - A California Department of Forestry trail crew worker makes his way back to safety along the 118 Freeway after creating a fire break during the Chatsworth fires of October.

JORGE GALLEGOS/VALLEY STAR

VETERANS REMEMBERED - Life member David E. Lawton from Burbank attends the 44th annual Veteran's Day Ceremony during the event at Forest Lawn in Hollywood Hills.

JORDAN DINAPOLI/VALLEY STAR

CAMPUS CAT - Many stray cats call Valley College home, and are cared for by various professors and campus employees. A rise in cat deaths has been reported to the Sheriff's office on campus.

They've seen fire and they've seen rain, along with athletic disappointment and a somber memorial.

In this final Gallery, the Valley Star is proud to present the five best images taken by this semester's photojournalists as chosen by the Valley Star photo staff.

TEXT AND LAYOUT BY BENJAMIN FAVELA

JORDAN DINAPOLI/VALLEY STAR

DIVING FOR HOPE - Valley opened the game against the Ventura Pirates Nov. 8 with a seven-point lead, but the Pirates' passing game led to 31 unanswered points. The Monarchs ended the season with a 1-9 record.

BENJAMIN FAVELA/VALLEY STAR

HALLOWEEN DECADENCE - A costumed man dances through raindrops during a musical performance at the 16th annual West Hollywood Carnaval on Halloween. Event organizers said that more people attended last year's festival than live in California's sixth most populous city, Fresno.